FAMILY SECRETS:

BY MR. PRATT.

FIVE VOLUMES.

SECOND EDITION; CAREFULLY REVISED.

VOL. I.

Concerning those things wherein men's lives, and their persons, are most conversant. BACON.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

A SALE within the year of one of the largest editions that has ever been published of any work of Imagination, will not be received as evidence of publick disapprobation, but of the exact reverse; yet, in compliance with a general idea of the work being too much protracted, and the interest of the story too much impeded, by means of the literary and other discussions, the whole performance now appears under favour of such retrenchments and corrections as either private or publick opinion suggested:—the author, however, reserving to himself the power of giving such retrenchments; in another place there being many readers who have publickly and privately declared, that the literary matter, taken separately and independently, formed not the least * valuable part of the book. It has ever been as much the author's pride, to adopt the opinion of manly candour, as to reject the effusions of determined malevolence, and of impotent cavillers; being convinced that these the most effectually destroy themselves, even in their attempts to destroy others.

* Analytical Review, July 1797.

TO THE REVIEWERS OF LITERATURE.

To confirm precept by example, it is proposed by the author of these pages, to inscribe the five divisions, which constitute his work, to as many different persons, who may illustrate, by their conduct, some important characters in his book.

In addressing the opening volume to the Reviewers, it is easy to prove, that neither in a general, nor particular sense, can he mean to insult their characters, or humiliate his own, by the impotent hope of obviating censure, or of securing applause. In a series of twenty years, nearly half of the author's life, he has received, from the literary journalists, a sufficient proportion of praise to animate, and of blame to improve him: the one has operated on his mind, as a poise to the other; while he has sincerely endeavoured to educe good from both: but without implicitly yielding his

his opinion, or faſtidiouſly retaining it againſt reaſon and remonſtrance.

The author had, in the firſt edition, ventured to denominate the work LITERARY, as well as domeſtick; becauſe the ſketches of literary converſation, woven at firſt into the hiſtory, were intended as an *experiment*, how far ſuch a plan might tend to exalt the *character* without diminiſhing the *intereſt* of this ſpecies of compoſition: the principal difficulty of which ſeemed to conſiſt in combining the one with the other, ſo as to invigorate both. As the profeſſional criticks are, by the very nature of their truſt, precluded from private communication, the author publickly ſolicited their opinion, how far the experiment was ſucceſsful, or rather, how far the general principal of it might be ſanctioned *.

* The iſſue of this reference will be read in the *Advertiſement* to the preſent edition; and is farther proved by the general abridgments.

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FAMILY

FAMILY SECRETS.

CHAPTER I.

NECESSARY.

IN one of the ſouthern vales of Devon, where the myrtle blooms unprotected, though viſited by the ſea-breeze, ſtood Fitzorton Caſtle.

A writer of deſcriptive talents, might, in reſpect of ſituation, expand himſelf into volumes; but, as the delineation of the minds and manners, the paſſions and purſuits, the ſtrength and weakneſs, imaginations, and ſtudies, of human beings, are more immediately the objects of this hiſtory, we muſt conſider vegetable beauty, however faſcinating, but as the ſcenery of our picture, and diſmiſs them with as few words as poſſible.

The caſtle was erected on the ſloping of a hill; the Manor-houſe of Clare on the declivity of an oppoſite mountain, with

an uniformity of taſte correſponding to the ſentiment which had long united the families; and, at a diſtance only to render the proſpect more engaging, a third venerable pile reared its head ſo centrically between the two, that, whether viewed from the manor-houſe or from the caſtle, the eye ſurveyed its aſpiring turrets, the majeſtic avenues that led to its folding gates, and the delightful woods that ſtretched themſelves on either ſide.

Indeed, the three domains were placed amidſt the very romance of Nature; but we are called from them at preſent by an earneſt deſire to introduce the reader to their inhabitants.

CHAPTER II.

A PROTESTANT CLERGYMAN AND HIS WIFE.

THE Reverend Sir Armine Fitzorton, at the ſetting out of theſe annals, was in the ſeventy-fourth year of his age. He had

had been, for full ſixty of that number, one of the healthieſt and happieſt men in the world. He married, early, a lady ſo entirely like himſelf in mind, in manners, and as far as feminine ſoftneſs may be permitted without ſtepping out of itſelf, in perſon alſo, that a juſt portrait of one might give a ſtriking reſemblance of the other. They were of the ſame age to a day, and retained, in the ſame degree, the remains of thoſe graces, which time itſelf ſeemed reluctant to deſtroy. Their very features, had, in ſome meaſure, triumphed over the tyrant who is, figuratively, ſaid to rejoice in the ruins of mortality; and their eyes, of the ſame deep and luſtrous colour, ſtill retained much of their penetrating and ſhining power.

Sir Armine brought with him into holy orders, all the principles neceſſary to practiſe the precepts they enjoin. A ſincere belief in thoſe precepts formed, indeed, the moſt exalted ingredient in his worldly happineſs; and the example of his life finely illuſtrated his doctrine, if we except the

prime error that ſhaded his character—a very ſtrong tincture of bigotry in matters of religion.

As a private gentleman, his character and conduct might very juſtly be ſummed up, in the words of the celebrated Lord Clarendon; he maintained the primitive integrity of the Engliſh nation, and ſupported in his Caſtle the good old manners, old good humour, and old good nature, of old Engliſh hoſpitality.

Three Sons had the happineſs of calling Sir Armine and Lady Fitzorton their parents; and when the characters of theſe young men began to form, that of Henry ſeemed to be compounded of properties that uſually conſtitute very contrary diſpoſitions. His mind ſometimes ſunk to the thickeſt melancholy, ſometimes flamed with irritable ardour, then took a ſoft intermediate ſhade between both of theſe extremes; and then ſoared again to the boldeſt heights of poetic enthuſiaſm; now rapid and uncontrolable, and now obedient to command, a fancy ſuddenly catching fire,

and as ſuddenly becoming extinguiſhed in ſolemn meditation. Such were the tints that ſeparated him from his brother John.

"I ſhould be aſhamed to be every body's favourite," ſaid John, frowning as in ſcorn! "for then muſt I aſſociate with fools and knaves; and how am I to diſtinguiſh the wiſe and honeſt but by giving them my time and company?" "I do not ſee that is at all neceſſary," anſwered Henry, ſmiling; "civility does not imply univerſal aſſociation; nor general good manners particular regard."

"Flattery is vice, but ſuavity is virtue," ſaid Henry: on this maxim he invited and conciliated. Before he opened his lips, his air gave promiſe of redreſs to the injured, protection to the helpleſs, and friendſhip to the worthy. John, according to a more ſtern hypotheſis, was diſtant in his addreſs to moſt men, to ſome inacceſſible. This had an influence no leſs on their minds than on their manners, and even ſimilar qualities were thereby diſtinctly coloured.

For inſtance, the courage of Henry was, like his other virtues, animated by more precipitation, and more conformable to the enthuſiaſtic ſpirit, the poetic romance of his character; but then, theſe threw over it a kind of popular and chivalric ſplendour that dazzled while it warmed. No leſs daring and heroic, John was more methodical, more correct, more deliberate, and he often retained his ſkill, of no leſs importance in conteſt than ardour, even when his antagoniſt had loſt all ſcience in a ſtorm of the paſſions.

Their perſons, however, were uniformly in keeping with their diſpoſitions. They were both the favourites of Nature; yet even in externals ſhe had diſplayed her accuſtomed love of variety. John was ſtrong and muſcular, but without corpulence, lofty without ſtooping, and of majeſtic ſtature, without being unwieldy. Henry was elegantly proportioned, and exhibited a delicacy neither inconſiſtent with agility of body, or activity of mind. The eyes of each were dark, but ſparkled with appropriate intelligence. Thoſe of John, by

a per-

a permanent inſpection, never gave their object the relief of a moment. Their perſeverance, in caſes of doubt or difficulty, was ſo determined, that, neither the moſt hardened guilt, nor the moſt conſcious innocence, could endure their ſcrutiny.

On the contrary, Henry's appeared to compaſs every thing by a glance, and the object under their ray frequently ſuffered as much from the intolerable brightneſs of their flaſh, which was ſudden and impetuous, as from the more ſlow and immitigable look of his brother.

The ſeparating marks alſo extended to language, accent, and effect. Love and pity breathed in the voice of Henry: in compaſſion he wept himſelf, and others wept with him; nor did mirth even beſtow on him a ſmile, or ſorrow a tear, which he did not repay with intereſt. His features, borrowing their caſt and colour from the ſubject, preſented moral and perſonal beauty, under a thouſand different forms and tintings; ſometimes diſcovering ideas, light, eaſy, and full of fire, and ſome-

times anticipating ſentiments more weighty and profound. Theſe were ſet off by an ingenuous feeling of diffidence, which now painted his cheek with the bloom of the roſe, and now with more than the lily's paleneſs.

The countenance of John, on the other hand, was florid from conſtitution, and pale only from intenſity of thought, or agony of ſenſation. In his voice there was neither melody nor perſuaſion: but tones of ſuch authority, expreſſion ſo firm, and ſenſe ſo unobſtructed, perhaps he deemed it unneceſſary to court the attention he knew he could command. The living volume of Nature, even from his earlieſt youth, had been his principal ſtudy; and the knowledge which is thence derived to the mind, was alone thought worthy of his contemplation: whereas, Henry was impatient of toil, and ſeemed to mount on the pinion of the eagle to eſcape from every taſk impoſed. John rarely condeſcended to trifle, while Henry had the happy art of rendering every trifle intereſting; whatſoever he touched, though dull, and droſſy

before,

before, acquired by the alchemy of genius, some shining quality.

With regard to the second brother, although his share in that part of the family transactions designed to form the following history, was only occasional, he was in some important instances, so interwoven with his relatives, that a neglect of his character would be not more disrespectful to him than injurious to the narrative.

The person of James Fitzorton, had neither the strength of his elder, nor the elegance of his younger brother, being of the middle size between both. His eyes varied in colour, as in expression, from those already described; they had not the searching power of John's, nor the brilliancy of Henry's; but were a pair of grey, full set, useful, honest optics, not destitute of meaning. His complexion was neither so fair as Henry's, nor so dark as John's; and his disposition was a just, and not seldom a necessary, equipoise between the excesses of Henry's natural sensibility and John's artificial government of himself. Nature had formed his mind as she

had modelled his perſon; in the middle way, between the fraternal extremes: a mediocrity which, however humble, had its uſe in the family; ſometimes checking the impetuous effuſions of Henry, ſometimes attempering the ſaturnine habits of John. In ſhort, a very proper middleman to be placed between two ſuch extremes.

CHAPTER III.

THE BROTHERS AND THE BLACKBIRD.

YET the wide diverſity of life, could ſcarcely furniſh a circumſtance in which their modes of conduct were ſimilar, even when their motives were the ſame. Their characteriſticks began to ſhew themſelves in the moſt early, and continued to the lateſt period. From the former, we will ſelect an almoſt infantine occurrence, becauſe it aſcertained their indelible points: the ſoft exceſs of Henry, the moderation of James, and the energy of John.

In the cold ſeaſon a poor blackbird had taken ſhelter in Sir Armine's green-houſe.

Ani-

Animated by the genial heat, it was bafking upon an orange-tree, and warmed out of the cold remembrances of time and place, ftretched out its wings in a kind of fummer languor over the branches, and had begun to pour a femi-note of gratitude and joy. Henry, haftily, yet on tip-toe, ran round to fhut the window at which it had entered, firft clofing the door. " I have wifhed for a blackbird I know not how long," whifpered he, " and it will be quite a charity to give that poor fellow good winter quarters in the caftle. I own, it is almoft a pity to difturb him now, he feems fo comfortable; but if he knew how very kindly I would ufe him, he would come a volunteer into my chamber." " Very kind to be fure," faid John, " to make him a flave for life; to my thoughts, he had better choofe his own lodging, though the beft to be had were in a barn, or in a hollow tree, and get an independent warm here in the hot-houfe, when he finds an opportunity, than be a prifoner in the beft room in the

caſtle, nay, in the king's palace; ſo be adviſed brother, and let him alone."

John ſoftly opened part of the window neareſt the bird. "No, I'll tell you how it ſhall be," obſerved little James,—"give the bird fair play; leave the window open, and let Harry try his fortune; if the bird ſuffers himſelf to be caught, when the path of freedom is before his eyes, why it will be his own affair you know." "But the act of catching him at all is arbitrary," ſaid John—ſturdily throwing his hat at the orange, and other exotic plants that grew in the direction of the tree where the blackbird had been perched. "Not at all brother," cried Henry, "when it is only to convey him to a better place"—running, as he ſpake, after the object of his wiſhes, almoſt with the ſwiftneſs of its own wings. John kept always behind, in the hope of pointing its flight to the window, and James ſtood impartially in the middle, unleſs he ſtept on one ſide or the other, to maintain fair dealing. The blackbird, mean time, alarmed by all parties,

parties, flew, irregularly, from ſhrub to ſhrub, from window to window, ſometimes beating it's breaſt againſt one object, ſometimes ſtriking its wing or beak againſt another, often being in the very path of liberty, and as often driven out of it. At length it ſank exhauſted to the ground, and was taken up almoſt without an effort to flutter, by Henry, whoſe little heart palpitated like its own. His ardent eye, quick breathing lip, and high colouring cheek, ſpoke his triumphs: yet amidſt his exultings, he forgot not mercy: the faireſt laurel of the conqueror, is humanity; and the very inſtincts of Henry were humane. He ſmoothed the ruffled plumes of his captive; poured over it every aſſurance of protection; preſſed its gloſſy pinion on his cheek; detained it with a ſoft trembling hand, and at length putting it, lightly held, into his boſom, ran with it to his chamber. "He has fairly won the bird, brother," ſaid James, following. "Certainly," replied John, with a diſſatisfied tone, "nothing can be fairer than to run

down a poor terrified little wretch, who has no power to refift; then feizing and dragging it to prifon! It ftruggled for freedom, till it was almoft gafping for breath; and I am afhamed, that I fuffered any thing to prevent my taking part with the unprotected in the caufe of liberty. But this, I fuppofe, you and my brother would call foul play, juft as you have ftyled his theft a kindnefs! Yes, the kindnefs of a chriftian robber, who fteals the innocent favage from his native land, and covers him with chains!"

Dreading the lofs of his treafure, Henry guarded it with a mifer's care; kept it concealed in his own room; but treated it with the utmoft indulgence, being at once its nurfe and companion, and fuffering no hand but his own to feed it. "Alas! it droops," faid its protector—bringing it down one day into an apartment where his brothers were fitting—"what can be done for it, James?" queftioned he with tears in his eyes. "Let it go," interpofed John; "it pines for the friends from whofe

society

ſociety it has been raviſhed; it languiſhes for freedom: let it go, and it will ſoon recover." "Perhaps," anſwered James, "it only wants more air, your chamber may be too confined: Suppoſe then," continued he,—willing to compromiſe betwixt liberty and ſlavery,—"you were to tie a ſilken ſtring round its leg, and lead it now and then about the garden?" "I propoſe an improvement on that idea," ſaid John—"clip one of its wings, and as you perſiſt in refuſing it its right to fly in the air, let it have the run of the garden; that on the ſouth ſide of the caſtle, you know, is walled round, and the bird cannot walk off." He reconciled Henry to this meaſure, by telling him that it would produce many good ends, beſides reſtoring the blackbird's health, and giving it a reliſh of its former enjoyments; amongſt other things he aſſured him, that it would recover its ſpirits, which would enable it to whiſtle back its loſt friends and relations. Henry could not reſiſt this: the idea of giving joy to others, was a joy to his own heart;

heart; the action by which it was bestowed, could alone furpafs it.

In effect, the bird was all the better for its liberty; it hopped, pecked, twittered, and daily appeared to gain new vifitors. There was in the walled garden, a fhed, where it neftled towards evening; but Henry, with foft fteps, would take care while it repofed, to ftrew food on the ground below, fo that it always found breakfaft ready in the morning; nor was dinner, or fupper provifion forgotten, fo that what it picked up in the garden was mere amufement to relifh exercife. The kind hearted Henry was *perfectly* fatisfied with this plan: John was only *half* fatisfied. James prudently fuggefted giving the growing wing another cutting. Henry agreed; for his favourite could now take half the garden at a low flight, though not top the walls. "Wait a little longer," faid John; "He is fo tame, and fo well pleafed with his prefent ufage, that perhaps he will indeed be a volunteer amongft us, and there will be a thoufand times the gratification

tification in having his ſociety with his own conſent." "But if he ſhould leave me?" ſaid Henry. "Have confidence in him; think how delightful it is to have friendſhip as a free-will offering: I ſhould hate any thing I forced to ſtay with me, as much as it could hate me. Can a jail bird love the jailor?" "I have a good mind to truſt it," obſerved Henry; "but I ſometimes think it looks up at the walls very ſly."—"That is nothing but a way they have with them," ſaid John, laughing. "What is your opinion James?" queſtioned Henry. "There can be, I ſhould think, but one opinion about that," replied James, taking out a little pair of ſciſſars. "O, he always was for cutting out, juſt like a girl; but act a more liberal part my brother," ſaid John; Henry was over-ruled. The feathers grew, and the blackbird flew away. Henry accuſed; John defended; James mediated. The grateful bird, however, ſtaid in the neighbourhood; ſang better, looked happier; Henry was, therefore, reconciled to his

loſs,

loſs, and John was at length contented. John was, indeed, nearer the age of mingling reflection with ſenſation, being ſix years older than James, who was Henry's ſenior only by eighteen months; but theſe traits of childhood remained fixed. As life advanced, John determined to inveſt reaſon with the honours of that ſovereignty which the moraliſts have aſſigned her, and which "can bear no rival near her throne." "The Paſſions," ſaid he, "ſhould be treated as good, or diſloyal ſubjects, the firſt with indulgence, the laſt with rigour; ſo will I govern them." James was nearly of the ſame way of thinking, except that he was diſpoſed to a more equal diſtribution, both of puniſhments and rewards. But Henry generally felt more than he reaſoned; yet of the majeſty and prerogative of the rational power, he had ideas even more ſublime than either of his brothers; but a more ardent temperament, and a fancy more vivid, made it more difficult to keep the paſſions within the line of their privileges. "My dear Harry," quoth John,

John, "you do not think enough"— "My dear John, I ſuppoſe my thinking time is not yet come; but it appears to me, at preſent, that if you would not ſuffer your thoughts to be ſuch ſpies upon your feelings, you would be ſometimes a much happier boy," replied Henry. "Much oftener the reverſe, I believe," reſumed John; "but ſhould I be wiſer and better?" "For my part," obſerved James—who was ſtanding between them, and taking a hand of each,—"if we could always be as near one another as we are now, we ſhould get on bravely."

CHAPTER IV.

A FATHER'S PROPOSITIONS.

SUCH were the Sons of Sir Armine and Lady Fitzorton: and when theſe young men might be ſuppoſed to have gained ſome acquaintance with themſelves, and with

with what would moſt contribute to their happineſs, their father convened them to meet in that apartment of the caſtle, which had aways been ſacred to pious meditation, or parental counſel. The Brothers being aſſembled, he addreſſed them thus: " Dear, very dear objects of my equal affections! you have now had time to cultivate that ſelf knowledge, which may aſſiſt you, in chooſing the paths, in which you may go with the moſt honour to yourſelves and profit to others. A life of idleneſs is uſeleſs at beſt, and of what it is at worſt I would not wiſh to give your pure minds any idea. Select then ſome object which may keep in virtuous, and wholeſome occupation, your minds and bodies. I am aware that this important matter has been deferred beyond the uſual date, at which it becomes a ſubject of arrangement, betwixt parents and their children; but, I think, it is generally brought into diſcuſſion too early. How can a juſt notion of human conduct be acquired before the human character is in

ſome

ſome meaſure formed? and until nature has had uncontrolled opportunity to point out her bias? I deſired to make ſilent obſervation on that bias as publick or private occurrence called it forth; that when it became a deciding and important queſtion, if I thought of your choice leſs favourably than you did, I might offer ſuch reaſons as would ſatisfy your minds, that my objections were grounded not on paternal tyranny, but fatherly love.

"Perhaps I am by this delay competent to anſwer my own queſtion, even as you would anſwer it. There can be little doubt, I think, that you, my eldeſt hope and bleſſing, will decide for the ſenatorial character, which is highly favourable to your argumentative powers, and no way inconſiſtent with the profound reſearches of a philoſophical mind. Your wiſh, James, I can ſee, will take an active part in the adminiſtration of public juſtice, and you may in due time, unite the *lawyer* with the *legiſlator*. There is an equanimity and poiſe in your diſpoſition, which in both

both these high offices is of the last importance: And my Henry's election will probably be that of his happy father; because without any infringement of the pastoral, which I am convinced will be considered as the primary, duties, he may cultivate the muse; and she is not more the adorner of social life than the hand-maid of Religion, when under the direction of that awful power.

"Tell me then, dearest honours of my life, if in these conjectures I have anticipated your wishes?"—John and James replied in the affirmative. Henry stifled a sigh in a cough, but his assent was included. "Nothing then remains but to gratify them,"—continued the venerable man, his voice attuned, and his look softened to his expression,—"And may ye, in all good things, be thus unanimous! Your election made, you will, with general purity of life, connect and improve the particular qualifications which are requisite, and it will be my delightful care to give them effect.

"But

"But there is another topick; I mean that of your patrimonial fortune. In the diſtribution of this I ſhould, by ſome parents, be thought as much to oppoſe the opinions and practice of the world, as in having conſulted you on the choice of life; I mean with reſpect to dates of conſultation and of diſtribution; yet nothing can be more certain than that one principle governs me in both; for as I think young people are called upon to fix their profeſſion much too early, I am of opinion, likewiſe, that the knowledge and adjuſtment of their inheritance, excluſively of what may be derived from ſuch profeſſion, comes to them too late. When youths are really capable of ſelecting the grand object of their future purſuit, as members of the community, the degree of judgment, which renders them competent to this, fits them to be truſted with the ſecret of their inheritance; unleſs, indeed, filial profligacy has made paternal confidence imprudent; but in my bleſſed caſe, where the unſullied bloſſom gives promiſe of the faireſt

fairest fruit, in due season, and has grown into no wanton luxuriance by the warmest influence of parental suns,—you see, my Henry, I, like you, consider poetick imagery sometimes an auxiliary to the display of truth,—I can have nothing to fear! Ah no! from dividing amongst you my little stores in possession, and pre-acquainting you, with those in expectance, I have every thing to hope."

The young men took their eyes from their father, and looked at each other.

"It might, perhaps, be good policy in parents to make their children not only wish the extension of their lives, on motives of natural affection, but on those of worldly interest, and it seems to me there is nothing tends so much to—I will not say *forgetfulness* of the parental tie, for that is a most tremendous extreme,—but to seducing the heart's most sacred comfort—*humanly* speaking—to an act of *mere duty* as a sordid attention to what may be gained by a parent's death! It may force the best children to grow indifferent about the life of

him

him who gave life to them; and it undoubtedly makes children of leſs happy diſpoſitions much worſe; for as kindneſs begets affection, there can be little doubt that rigour, if it cannot extinguiſh the ſentiment of natural affection, impairs its pleaſure, and obſtructs its energy.

"That it may ſtill be the heart-felt wiſh of my dear boys, that their fond father, aged as he is, ſhould yet live to ſee their happineſs, I will to-morrow preſent a ſtatement of our mutual property; I ſay *mutual*, becauſe I have invariably conſidered it as held only in truſt for them and their beloved mother; and, though there have been ſome entanglements, I hope to prove I have been a faithful family ſteward; and, indeed, my children, that is the only character in which it ſhould be a father's ambition to appear.

"One of you," continued he, looking at Henry, "will, I truſt, aſcend the ſummit of fortune; but equal in the affection of my nature, your patrimonial rights are independent of adventitious aid, and ſhould

be equalized alſo, did not the ſucceſſion to a family title, to which is attached the decent dignity of an ancient houſe, make ſome extraordinary ſupply neceſſary to my ſon John."

John, who ſeemed leſs to reliſh the arrangements than either of his brothers, put a negative ſo ſolemn on this, that it eſtabliſhed his point, notwithſtanding Sir Armine ſtruggled with a frown: James maintained the ſilence which often waits on affecting emotions; and Henry had been weeping ſome time. The father's frown melted away.

"Be it ſo then," rejoined Sir Armine, giving, at length, a ſmiling ſanction to his eldeſt ſon's negative. John bowed reſpectfully, and declared, in his laconic way, that the houſe ſhould be ſupported.—"But how my dear boy?" aſked his father, giving yet more force to his ſmile, "philoſophy is rather apt to neglect the ſublunary contemplations of brick and mortar, records and rent-rolls, courts-leet, and courts-baron."—"Then poetry, Sir," exclaimed Henry,

Henry, with glowing cheeks, "ſhall aſſiſt!" —"Worſe and worſe!" cried Sir Armine, broadening the ſmile into a laugh; "the Muſe, you know, Harry, conſiders Ruins as her beſt materials; diſmantled towers, a broken column, a mouldering wall, dilapidated manſions, and caſtles in confuſion, ſerve but as the ſcenery of her pictures, and it is well a votary of fragment-loving Phœbus is not heir to this old Fitzorton fabrick." "But in the adminiſtration of juſtice, Sir," ſaid James, "I truſt domeſtic equity would not be thought unprofeſſional." "Nor," interpoſed John, adopting parliamentary language, "ſhall I, ſurely, be called to *order*," bowing to Sir Armine, and giving a hand to each of his brothers, "or be thought *unparliamentary*, if I enter a *proteſt* againſt any ſuch *meaſure*;—it is very poſſible for a little diſcretion, and ſaving in ſuperfluities, no way, I hope, incompatible with the dignity either of Philoſophy or the Houſe of Commons, to grant me the ſupplies requiſite for the dignity of my *own* houſe, without *levying*

burthens, or raiſing *contributions*, on my *allies*. Not," added John, qualifying the former independent notions; "not that I ſhould proudly reſiſt aſſiſtance ſhould it be neceſſary; neither would I unnaturally, in ſuch caſes, go out of my own houſe to maintain its honours."

The brothers joined hands.

"Well, well," anſwered the father, "I ſee there is little danger of our good old manſion *falling*, in any ſenſe of the word, while the Virtues, Arts, and Nature herſelf, are reſolved to ſupport it."

"O!" cried Henry, "may it want no other pillar, for many a ſmiling year, than the ſacred one which has long, and, ah! bleſſed be God, ſtill preſerves, unimpaired, its beauty and its ſtrength."

"Dear boy!" exclaimed his father.

"Henry has ſpoken for us all," obſerved John to James.

"With ſuperior eloquence," anſwered the latter.

And, aſſerted the former, "with equal ſin-

ſincerity—bleſſings on our father! But he is too good."

Here the ſons dropt on their knees.

"Bleſſings on my children!" ejaculated Sir Armine, raiſing them; his accents more tender than diſtinct.

The brothers, during this conference, were ſupporting, and ſupported by their truly venerable Sire: a ſoft pauſe enſued, and they withdrew.

CHAPTER V.

A SON'S OBJECTIONS.

THE next day was taken up in ſettling the propoſed independencies of theſe young men; and as John ſturdily maintained the right of equal diviſion, both immediate and reverſionary, his father no longer reſiſted. He laid before his children the rent-roll of his eſtates. He neither concealed the prodigalities of ſome, nor failed to dwell on the prudence of others of his anceſtors; he did not hide his own indiſ-

cretions, they were chiefly generous ones, ſince the property came into his poſſeſſion: In ſhort, he diſcloſed every thing that might operate on their impreſſive minds in the way of emulation, or of eſcape. What he deemed was not yet ripe for diſcovery he reſerved, and at the cloſe of the conference he ſaid: "Dear youths, I have now developed to you thoſe things which fathers too often conſider as Family Secrets, till their bodies are mouldering in the grave. I have unfolded myſelf to the hearts of my children, and put into their hands the means of being juſt and generous, wiſe and good. You have always been free to think. You will be now free to act. The three deeds I now deliver will ſhew, that though the ſtreams are amply ſupplied, the ſacred fountains are by no means exhauſted; my ſons, we may henceforward form a little republick of our own, and enjoy the wholeſome freedom ſo eſſential to a commonwealth. It has, indeed, been my endeavour to train you to independent thoughts, that on their baſis you might conſtruct independent actions; for

for nothing honourable, nothing noble, in truth, nothing natural, can proceed from minds ſlaviſhly controuled."

Here Lady Fitzorton made her appearance, and embracing her ſons, ſmilingly, confirmed their eſtabliſhment. Sir Armine, by way of giving a ſolemn finiſhing of the whole, requeſted that the bleſſing of God Almighty might be humbly implored on the arrangements of the morning, obſerving, that no work could be deemed concluſive, or good, until ratified by prayer.

The parents went out together; Sir Armine ſaying he ſhould expect them in an hour in the private chapel of the caſtle.

The ſenſations of Henry, as uſual, crimſoned his cheek, and bathed his eyes, while they enchained his tongue: from ſimilar, and on this occaſion, equal ſenſibility, James, alſo, was ſilent; but a doubt aroſe in the always ſcrutinizing mind of the elder brother. When John had reached the porch of the chapel he thus expreſſed himſelf: " Warmed, and humbled, by the

 gene-

generoſity of the propoſal, are we, my brothers, perfectly right in accepting theſe aſſignments in Sir Armine's life time?" "Good heaven!" exclaimed Henry, "how undutiful a thought!" "It ſtrikes me, however, as a juſt one: Is it fit or proper to ſuffer our father to put us in a manner out of his power; the power of reſtraining our vice ſhould we degenerate?"

"Vice! how can you ſuppoſe it poſſible brother John? Will not what the beſt of men and of parents has done, be at once a preventive from evil, and an encouragement to good?"

"I am not upon ſuch good terms with myſelf, brother Henry. The love we bear to a parent ought, perhaps, like that we owe to our heavenly father, to be attempered and chaſtened by fear. And if the latter be deſtroyed, I am not ſure that the other may not preſume a little too much."

"And," anſwered Henry, "ſhall I reverence—methinks *that*, brother, is the better word—ſhall I reverence my beloved father

father leſs for conduct that not only endears but exalts him? If I before loved and honoured, ſhall I not now venerate? ſhall I not adore him?"

"I hope not brother: That dear father will tell you, adoration belongs to another parent; not that we will ſtand here upon the threſhold of the Temple of the Moſt High to contend about words, or to criticiſe the hyperboles of a muſe-ſtruck mind—I give that mind credit for its ſincerity on this ſubject, even amongſt all the viſions of poeſy—but, in human life, there is always a poſſibility of the worſt of human errors—that worſt is ingratitude."

James admitted this, but thought there might be a medium—half the intended bounty given to their diſcretion, and half retained by the father, as an experiment. "And of this vice the ſublime, if ſublimity can apply to atrocious deeds, is ingratitude filial," continued John, throwing out his ſecond brother's amendment. The whole maſs of Henry's generous blood ſeemed to undergo a ſudden revulſion—

 "Brother,

"Brother, brother, how can you have ſuffered a thought ſo unnatural to enter your boſom!" "And has not your poetical reading then," retorted John, "furniſhed you with an example of its being amongſt the poſſible ſtains in human nature?—Have you forgot the ſtory of children under our very circumſtances?—and is not that ſtory recorded by Nature's moſt profound Poet and Hiſtorian?—were not Lear's daughters as tenderly careſſed, as amply accommodated, as fondly confided in, as the ſons of Sir Armine Fitzorton?—Think, brother, on what *has* been; tremble for what *may* be."

"Oh! if I could believe myſelf," exclaimed Henry, reddening, "capable of making a return like their's, my prayer would be to prevent that capacity by immediate death, brother—even on the ſacred ſpot whereon I now ſtand! Ingratitude to my father! O! God!"

"God forbid!" anſwered John, "any of us ſhould be capable of it—but I am always more afraid of myſelf than of any

body

body elſe; and as I dare not put much truſt in my own nature, nor have had, as yet, any experience how command will operate on minds accuſtomed to obey, I could wiſh the entire *authority* of a father had ſtill accompanied his *affection*; and that he might have granted, or denied, our wiſhes, inſtead of yielding us up to thoſe who may be diſpoſed to deny too little, and grant too much."

"I wiſh brother John," ſaid Henry, "you had not put an image ſo painful into my mind. It is enough to make one turn an eye of ſuſpicion on oneſelf."

"There can be no great harm in that," anſwered John. "A citadel is not the leſs ſecure for ſuſpecting there may be an enemy lurking within the walls, and thereupon doubly urging the commander to vigilance; for my part, I already ſee enough of human nature to know it cannot be too well watched."

"On the contrary, brother," argued Henry, "the more credit we give to ourſelves, or others, the leſs will our faith be

abuſed. Who will take an unfair advantage of generoſity? and, indeed, there are many ſituations in which confidence begets honour:—The truſted man will be emulous to prove himſelf truſt worthy."

Sir Armine, attended by his Lady, now joined the youths.—"My ſons let us proceed to the chapel, and there commemorate a day which, I hope, will be one of the moſt joyful of my life."

"I believe it from my inmoſt ſoul," cried Henry.

"I hope it from the bottom of mine," ſaid James, "and betwixt generous hope, and pious fear, our virtue may be ſafe."

"Amen!" ſighed John—following his brothers into the chapel ſomewhat reluctantly.

CHAPTER VI.

PARENTAL TUITION.

SIR Armine officiated, and having finiſhed his uſual ſervice of the day, he adjoined

ſome extemporaneous effuſions applicable to the occaſion. They ſo touchingly characterized both the paſtor and parent, that the little family congregation were extremely moved.

The reſt of the evening was employed in ſports innocently feſtive, or in reflections ſuitable to the tranſactions of the day; and at night, from the full, but not overflowing, bowl of temperance, ſucceſs was wiſhed and drank to the Senate, the Pulpit, and the Bar—and the ſecond round to John, Henry, and James Fitzorton.

In the morning, however, John, who inherited his father's tenacity, and always maintained that if a parent had prerogative, a child had privileges, formally reſumed his diſcuſſion of the grand queſtion, Whether a child's being made independent of the father, during the life of the latter, was fit and proper to be acceded to; and, after arguing the caſe various ways, brought his brothers ſo thoroughly into his way of thinking, it was, at length, reſolved, that how generous ſoever it might be for a parent

to offer, it was indecorous in a child to receive, what ſhould be from time to time, beſtowed in reward, or withheld in puniſhment.

This deciſion was followed by a ſolemn ſurrender of their independencies. The three ſons having deſired, and obtained, an audience, the deeds of gift were preſented on their knees. John for himſelf and his brothers, with reverence and humility, explained the motive. "Your children, Sir, entreat you will not deprive them of the greateſt happineſs they can enjoy in this world—that of your diſpenſing your benevolence to them, according to their deſervings—they feel overwhelmed and embarraſſed with the ſudden poſſeſſion of ſo important a ſum; and that from your hand alone, they could be content to receive it."

Sir Armine's parental ſovereignty was herein ſo ably ſoftened away, that he was ſubdued without perceiving he had been oppoſed.

In

In truth, although this unexpected circumſtance cut up by the root the benevolent deſign which the worthy prieſt had long cheriſhed; he ſo clearly ſaw into the motives of the mover, that, with the agreeable flattery, he accepted the relinquiſhment of his children's rights, though given back within a few hours after they had been ſettled. Each of the ſons had his own argument in favour of the meaſure. John, the propoſer, declared his approbation of it, becauſe it was philoſophically agreeable to the nature of things. James found it worthy of adoption, becauſe he was happy to be removed from the danger of running into extremes. Henry played with the ſubject, after his own airy and agreeable manner, and ſettled his ſatisfaction by a copy of verſes, in which he aſſerted, that from the parent ſource, the ſtreams of bounty would be diſpenſed by ſuperior wiſdom, fertilize every flower of the fancy by due ſupplies, and invigorate the virtues, thoſe fruits of the heart.

Sir Armine undertook the inſtruction of his ſons, in all the elementary know-ledge that could prepare them for their deſtined profeſſions. The reverend pre-ceptor, wiſely and wholeſomely divided the day into equal parts, for the purpoſes of ſerious ſtudy, amuſing mental relaxa-tion, and intermediate exerciſe. For a conſiderable time there were few devia-tions or interruptions in theſe intereſting pleaſures, or purſuits; although Henry cheriſhed a concealed diſinclination to the path which had been chalked out for him.

After the venerable teacher had ſettled the grand baſis of morals and of religion, on which Sir Armine propoſed to build the character of his ſons, he was anxious to give to their manners and external be-haviour, which he conſidered as the ſuper-ſtructure, every amiable embelliſhment; for, although ſomewhat too tenacious of his own modes of faith, he was not of thoſe zealots who imagine the innocent adornments, either of the human figure or

under-

understanding, that render man so interesting to man, incompatible with spiritual duty; but when his son John expressed an euridite scorn for all sort of dress, beyond even a coarse simplicity, he observed obliquely, to Henry, "I take it extremely kind in your brother John, to labour as I perceive he doth, to reconcile the habit of a gentleman, with the mental dress of a scholar. I dare say, a little more time will convince him, there is no good reason why a man of science should be a sloven. I am, in the same degree, flattered to see that you, Henry, have had the good sense to correct the contrary excess; an extreme attention to the fashion of the day is no less a fault, than a contemptuous negligence. The *simplex munditiis* of James, always gratified me. James bowed. John inclined his head also, but stubbornly; and contended, that he could not still help thinking the dressing hour a heavy sacrifice of the immortal, to the animal part of man—and that not being to any good end, it shortened a very short existence.

ence. "By no means," urged his father; "in many inſtances it lengthens life; in all, it renders it more acceptable to ſociety, and more comfortable to ourſelves."

"But then, Sir," argued the perſiſting John, "ſuch ſcrubbing, ſprucing, trimming, ſcrapeing—ſuch tayloring, perfumering, mantua-making—ſuch a convolvement and tranſmutation of the quick and dead; of the natural living man, into the dried ſkins and hides of dead beaſts, and all this even before modern men and women are fit to be ſeen by one another! It humiliates one to think, that the verieſt inſect or animal, which is murdered and ſtripped to cover the ſhivering favourite of creation, is leſs the ſlave of contingence. The butterfly paſſes in his robe of many colours, and mocks my patch-work finery. My ſpaniel ſhakes his coat and is dreſſed without loſs of time; but laborious man!"—"On the contrary," rejoined his father, "a habit of external neatneſs, renders all the labours of the toilette, in a great meaſure, unneceſſary; and I am of opinion, that

that the creature would not have been featured ſo fair, faſhioned with ſo much harmony, nor endued with a deſire of appearing amiable and attractive to thoſe with whom he is deſtined to aſſociate, were it not pleaſing alſo to the Creator; and, methinks, it is as much a contempt of God's gracious bounties, to ſuffer that which is ſaid to be expreſſive of his ſacred image, to be disfigured by filth; as for the ſoul herſelf to be defiled by moral uncleanneſs."

John, though proud of intellectual independence, was ſtruck, not more by the purity, than the piety of this concluſive remark; and from that hour, to the lateſt of his life, he was as attentive to exterior, as a being to whom is intruſted the care of a body and a ſoul ought to be.

CHAP-

CHAPTER VII.

CHARACTERISTICKS.

THE diſſimilitude between John, James, and Henry, ſtrengthened as they grew: Henry continued unſuſpecting; John was more ſuſpicious and reſerved; James preſerved a medium betwixt implicit confidence, and jealous caution. A compaſſionate heart led John to relieve diſtreſs whereſoever he found it; but he generally imputed even his own bounty to a degrading ſource; but then John had to number amongſt his firſt impreſſions a deception on his heart. "It is my weakneſs, not my judgment," would he ſay, "my paſſion, not my reaſon, that ſtill diſpoſes me to liſten to tales of woe; not a word of which I believe one time out of an hundred. I know, that all the joys, and all the miſeries, all the pains, and all the pleaſures of life, with the tears and ſmiles that *ought* to be their honeſt and invariable ſignals, can be counterfeited!

Limbs,

Limbs, which enjoy the fair proportions of nature, are diſtorted to work on my humanity. Rags, and other appearances of the moſt ſqualid and abject poverty, are aſſumed as the beſt engines of deceit to procure riches to the idle, and debaucheries to the infamous. Even infants are purchaſed or ſtolen, to multiply the appeals of the hypocrite; for every actual neceſſity of almoſt every kind, mental and bodily, the benevolence of the land in which I live, has afforded its adequate ſupply, and thoſe who are thruſt from its protection, either find an intereſt in continuing the trade of apparent diſtreſs, or are deſervedly the outlaws of public compaſſion." "I dare ſay, all which we have read or been told," would Henry frequently ſay, "reſpecting the deceit of man, and of woman kind, is true; but my heart has no time to weigh its emotions, brother, in the ſcrupulous balance which is held by reaſon. I do not ſtop to calculate chances. I hear a tale of diſtreſs. I ſee an object of apparent poverty; my hand is extended,

ed, and the relief adminiſtered before I hardly know what I have done. I follow a tender emotion: nature has commanded, and I obey; but I do not reaſon upon it."

"What, does all this prove," would John reply, "but that we are both fools, brother? and have only a different way of committing the ſame folly. I with, you without thought? Here you have the advantage."

"Not at all," would Henry anſwer, "I wiſh the perſon benefited had been a better ſort of being; but his wants ſeemed as immediate as extreme; yet if I had taken all the time which reaſonable and judicious gentlemen require to trace out character, and fortify myſelf by vouchers, the man muſt have ſtarved before I knew whether I could be juſtified in preventing it."

"A truce, a truce!" interrupted James, who uſually ſummed up theſe family converſations, when Sir Armine was not preſent—"Your hearts deſerve to be treated with more reſpect. Hypocriſy deducts from

from the pleaſure of the generous, it is true; but ſhould never deſtroy it. Againſt the caſualties of bounty, my brothers, no tender nature can be defended. The appeal is made to a power which often arrives at maturity, before we know there is any thing of equal force in the world."

CHAPTER VIII.

REASONING AND FEELING.

ONE day when the ſame party were aſſembled, and the diſcourſe had taken a ſimilar turn, John attacking human nature, Henry defending it, and James acting as a check on both, a poor man with every appearance of the moſt abject wretchedneſs, his limbs almoſt as tattered as the garments that covered them; a patch on his eye, and both his legs tucked under ſtumps, aſſailed their pity. "What's the the odd's now," ſaid John, "that this is not a damn'd rogue? Here, fellow, keep the

the tricks which you are preparing to play off upon us for the next traveller; and, for once, I will make it your intereſt to tell the truth," throwing ſixpence into his hat; "confeſs, are not you a ſad hypocrite? and were not you on the point of telling us a pack of pity-moving lies?" "Fie, brother!" ſaid James, "you have no right to inſult, if you do not chooſe to relieve the man. His misfortune is ſufficiently obvious, however it may have been induced." Hereupon, the mendicant began the cant of his profeſſion, which drew from Henry an additional ſhilling. "Nay," ſaid John, "there are very few of the beſt dreſſed beggars have virtue enough to refuſe falſehood, when they are paid double for it." "Are there no ſuch things then as principles?" ſaid Henry: "Not amongſt beggars, in high or in low life," rejoined John. "There, fellow, as you cannot ſerve God and Mammon, take your choice, a rogue or an honeſt man?—my ſixpence or his ſhilling."—"Lord, you're a merry gentleman. I like both, an't pleaſe your honour,

honour, and God blefs you!" "There, I told you fo," faid John, "a damn'd rogue!"—Henry fmiled. "The good man would offend neither of you; fo accepts the bounty of both," obferved James, joining their pleafantry. "Well," anfwered John, "I need not fay who is the rogue, but I know who are the fools." At this inftant, a poft-chaife paffing rapidly was met by another carriage, and overfet, the driver was thrown, and the horfes were dragging the carriage. The three brothers affifted: the beggar inftantly drew the patch from his eye, difincumbered his legs, tucked the ftumps under his arm, and paffed them. The accident happening within a fhort diftance from the family manfion, James propofed fending for Sir Armine's carriage.—"What occafion for carriages?" cried the beggar, catching the lady in his arms, and running off with her, "I warrant the gentleman, who don't feem much hurt, will follow." The three brothers entered the apartment juft as the beggar, having pro-

cured every accommodation the caſtle afforded, ſet off for the village apothecary with incredible ſpeed. He returned with ſome hartſhorn. "There, an pleaſe your ladyſhip, that will bring you about—pure ſtrong—has taken away my breath, and, I hope, it will bring back yours."

The lady recovered apace. The gentleman had received little injury. Sir Armine and Lady Fitzorton were from home. The apothecary followed his hartſhorn; the cure was ſoon performed; for the miſchief conſiſted rather in alarm than injury, and the travellers purſued their journey. The tumult of circumſtances now ſubſiding, the brothers had leiſure to advert to the metamorphoſis of the beggar. "Well!" ſaid John to Henry, "and who is in the right now? a rogue or no rogue? why, what's become of your timber, Mr. Beggar?"—"The Lord knows!" replied the beggar, archly: "I hope, gentlemen, you have not left my legs behind you." "To be ſure," ſaid James, "they muſt be conſidered as part of the accident." "O, he

can

can do very well without them, I ſee," ſaid John. "I beg your pardon there," anſwer'd the beggar, "I ſhould ſtarve without them: I uſe theſe things," pointing to his natural legs, "only upon extraordinary occaſions: but my timber is my ſtaple commodity—well, God ſave your honours—I muſt go and look after my ſupport." The facetious mendicant was bowing out, leaving his company not a little amuſed, when John caught his hand—"You are a fine fellow! and yet you muſt be a rogue too! or elſe thoſe legs would have carried you into a much more reputable buſineſs." The beggar ſhook his head!—"However," continued John, "if all the extraordinary occaſions upon which you uſe them are like the preſent, 'tis pity you ſhould ever again tuck them behind you. So here's ſomething to keep them in repair," giving him a crown-piece.—"And here's a trifle," added Henry, pouring out the contents of his purſe, "to buy you a new pair." "Now that's an encouragement to the ſcoundrel part of him," ſaid John! "I think, in-

deed," ſaid James, "half-a-crown a piece would have been a more juſt diviſion." "An pleaſe your honour," replied the man, "its very well as it is: but for that matter, I would not take a dozen purſes for my ſtumps, and yet I'm no ſcoundrel neither; Ah! gentlefolks, if you knew but their hiſtory!—but that's no matter," added he, fetching a deep ſigh. Tears guſhed to his eyes, and he turned away his face. "Poor fellow!" ſaid the apothecary, whoſe name was Burton, "you have made a miſtake; here is ſixpence coming to you out of your ſhilling." "I forgot that, maſter," anſwer'd the beggar; "however, I'll take the teſter," "I hope," whiſpered James to John, "you will allow, though it was only in the diviſion of a ſhilling, that this action of our apothecary tells to his honeſty, when you remember that, his large family and ſlender means of ſupporting it, make every ſixpence a matter of conſequence." "Say you ſo!" cried the mendicant. "The heart beneath theſe many colour'd rags," cried Henry, "would

give

give dignity to ermine." "Who would be the lofer then," faid the beggar? "A noble fellow!" exclaim'd John, "in fpite of his ftumps." Henry fhook him heartily by the hand, in doing which, one of the tatters of our beggar's coat of patches, got entangled in one of Henry's wrought buttons, and, as is generally the cafe, when the weak and poor come into contact with the ftrong and fplendid, fell to the ground. Henry expreffed regret. "Blefs your honour, no confequence, only I muft not lofe it:---'Tis a little bit of my property," faid the beggar, ftooping to pick up the remnant. "Thou fhalt have a new fuit," faid Henry. "Your honour's all goodnefs, but that would be my ruin. Every rag about me, is, at a moderate computation, worth a guinea: but, as I have a poor bedridden father, who has no objection to having a good coat upon his back: and as your honour's bounty has enabled me to give him one, his fon fhall blefs you with his laft breath, although, he fhould live to wear out a whole foreft in ftumps." John, here,

took the beggar a moment aſide; after which, the latter ſmiled merrily on the company, and ſeeing the apothecary making his bows to the family, exclaim'd, "And now if you pleaſe, Maſter Doctor, I will purchaſe a few things for poor father in your way." They went out together.

CHAPTER IX.

ALL DIFFER YET ALL AGREE.

ARRIVING at the ſhop—for the adventure would not be complete were we not to tell you what happen'd there—our mendicant, who had luckily found the ſtumps, perceived the apothecary in waiting, ſurrounded by his family.

Henry's whiſper reſpecting the worth and poverty of poor Burton was ſtill in his memory: and while he was in ſearch of the ſtumps, he argued,—"Here now is a man who *muſt* be honeſt, or elſe he never would have thought of returning my ſixpence; and he *muſt* be poor, for the honourable

nourable gentleman that gave me the purſe ſaid ſo in a whiſper. He muſt not dig, and I may: he is aſhamed to beg and I am not: he is a father, and has perhaps a dozen mouths to feed three times a day, and I have but two,—dad's and my own."

This reaſoning brought him almoſt to the threſhold of the apothecary's ſhop; where, after paying his reſpects, as they are commonly paid by thoſe who expect to receive favours, and as rarely by thoſe who intend to beſtow them; he made out a liſt of what he did—*not* want: that he might handſomely furniſh the vender with a little of what he *did* want, for, notwithſtanding his ſtumps, our mendicant had as little to do with phyſic as moſt men, and was not, indeed, much acquainted even with the names of more than half a dozen out of the million of poiſons and antidotes diſcovered by the art of man. Such drugs, however, as he could recollect, and in ſuch proportions as he found, upon inquiry, would amount to the quantum of caſh he had predetermined to diveſt himſelf of,

that he might not ſeem proudly to *give* money, he bought: put them into his pocket, as carefully as if the life of a friend depended upon their operation; then facetiouſly entering into a ſhort diſcourſe with the apothecary's wife, danced the ſmall children on his knee; and as to the larger ones, ſaid he, if I find any ſweet-hearts at the fair, or any where elſe in my hops, worth ſending, you ſhall hear from me again.

CHAPTER X.

DIFFERENT OPINIONS IN LITERATURE.

IN relief of their ſerious ſtudies came in the intellectual amuſements of the three brothers. The juvenile muſe of the younger, by her light and playful ſallies, pleaſantly contraſted and agreeably ſet off the more ſolid, not to ſay ſolemn meditations of John; thence, indeed, and from an early ſorrow, the ſports of the latter took an awful

awful turn. He read the poets as a relaxation from the philosophers, yet he read them not as an enthusiast, but as a critick; and therefore detected more faults than beauties. Henry, on the other hand, with all the ardour of poetic passion, read as he wrote, to be delighted, and so found more beauties than faults; he was too much in love with the muse to look severely for, or at, her little inconsistencies, and, as is the case with all lovers, was too sincerely smitten with the charms of his object to be angry at her foibles.

This dissimilitude in their opinions, however, was a fresh source of amicable contention.

Henry had been reading to his father some pieces or poetry, and had made liberal reflexions, mix'd with expressions of admiration, on various passages—At a pause in the composition, John was referred to for the suffrage of his opinion.—"You are silent, brother," cried Henry—"yes—now for a libel on the lyre."

"Far be it from me," return'd John, "to treat any lady, mortal or immortal, with disrespect; but really, Henry, the goddess of your idolatry is so very uncertain and capricious a deity, that even you, who are one of her warmest votaries, must confess she is in no wise to be depended on, either for inspiration or happiness.—She has been known, indeed, to leave her suppliant in the midst of his sighs and groans." —"Avaunt the slander of such cavil!" exclaimed Henry.—"Away with the common-place detraction of such as never knew the soul-chearing influence of the power they condemn! Never was the Muse faithless to those she loved. Even I, my brother, the least favour'd perhaps of her votaries," continued our young enthusiast, "yet sincerely proud of her slightest attentions—even I, in countless instances, have relied on her to strengthen me in good, and prevent me from the commission of evil—but cold-blooded critics, and freezing philosophers, and fluttering coxcombs, and sordid worldlings, are insensible of the potency

tency of the heaven-defcended mufe, to diminifh the pains, and heighten the tranfports of human life. Ah, they do not know with what a force fhe acts, what an ardour fhe kindles, what a foftnefs fhe diffufes, what an energy fhe infpires!"

"Very fine, brother! but were you to be the denizen of all the nine, and the felected favourite of their infpiring god, I am ftill of opinion, poetry muft yield the palm to philofophy. The firft is as the flame of the meteor, that glares and paffes by—while we admire, we tremble. Not fuch the fteady rays that dart into the foul from facred philofophy! at once bright and lafting; animating as the fun—powerful as"——"And what," queftioned the eager Henry, "has this proud Philofophy, that the Mufe is not more nobly gifted with? Does the vaunted pre-eminence confift in beftowing more fortitude in mental, or more patience in corporeal anguifh?—Does it better defend the bofom from wrongs, or pour a more falutary balm upon its wounds? Ah, my cold brother! yes, let

me repeat, had you but for a moment, felt the genuine magick of the lyre, had nature permitted you to experience the rapturous ſenſations which ſwell the heart, when fancy paints her *viſionary* favourite, or its ſtronger throbs, when poetick truth, —truth adorn'd by the muſe, draws her *real* hero; had you ever been conſcious of the enviable ſigh, which heaves from the breaſt, the delicious tear which guſhes from the eye of genius, when innocence is to be protected, guilt confronted, and benevolence or pity pourtrayed—or had you ever been ſenſible to the muſe's power to ſoothe the thouſand ills, to which, alas! her votaries are heir: to charm away their ſenſe of cruel injuries, till injury itſelf is forgot, and the aggreſſor as often forgiven, you would confeſs that the immortal wreath is not aſſigned to her without a cauſe."

"Her tears and ſighs I am diſpoſed to allow her," anſwer'd John; "they are part of the heavenly dame's paraphernalia; but what if Philoſophy ſhould, upon a more manly and ſober principle, puniſh vice and

protect virtue, pardon offences and pity offenders, without all this mourning and wailing? No, no, philosophy and prose for me!" "And for me," retorted Henry, "no apathy either in verse or prose."

All this time, James had seated himself quietly in the middle of the room, employed with his pencil; every now and then taking his eye from the drawing-paper to the disputants, and then calmly proceeding in his work. "Was ever any thing so provoking!" exclaim'd Olivia, a young lady (whom we shall speedily introduce) "only see if that immoveable James is not coolly engaged in" —— "What?" interposed Henry, eagerly, looking over the paper, which James as earnestly concealed. "Nay," said the latter, "that is not fair; I did not interrupt you or John in your amusements: why should you disturb me in the enjoyment of mine? Not that I have any serious objection either to share with you what has given me pleasure, even though I could derive no satisfaction from yours. And yet, strictly speaking, mine

has

has arifen out of yours; but, indeed, I have but juft begun my fketch."

James difcover'd his drawing, which he had entitled, "Moral Geography." It reprefented three veffels of different fize and figure, the one a pleafure barge, lightly and elegantly conftructed, the colours difplayed, the top-gallant fails fet, and bounding over the billows with incredible fwiftnefs. The fecond, was a line of battle fhip of majeftic port, proudly buffeting a ftormy fea, and, feeming indignant of the oppofing winds, held her determined courfe. The third, was a veffel of burthen, a flow failer, very little ornamented, yet ftrongly and ufefully built: all were deftined for the fame port, all ftarted nearly at the fame time, the firft two were placed very forward as having got a-head of the other, but braving the tempeft, and rafhly confident in themfelves, they were exhibited in another part of the drawing, prefenting fignals of diftrefs, firing guns, the one ftruck againft the rocks of Scilly, the other againft Charybdis, mean while, the third

veſſel, too humble to contend with hurricanes, and not preſumptuous enough to hazard extremes, laid to till the ſtorm was over, and paſſed ſafely, though unambitiouſly, between. "Your rocks and quickſands, upon paper, James prove nothing—Ah! how do I wiſh my deareſt father," ſaid Henry, after giving the matter a little reſt, "that you would deign to ſettle our ever-jarring opinions on this ſubject. Yours have, indeed, been already favourable, but John, I perceive, wants conſtant repetitions of high authority to make him think well of any art but his own." "I admit what you have related, brother, to be poetry," replied John, "and ſome of its fire has reached me, but there is no degree of authority can make me an *advocate* for palpable abſurdity, whether in life or literature, in verſe or in proſe, though the undue exerciſe of ſuch authority, which I can never have to fear from our father, might make me ſilent."

John bowed reſpectfully to Sir Armine, who took his hand cordially, and ſmiled kindly

kindly on Henry. "You muſt not, my Harry," ſaid the impartial James, "ſuffer your name to be catalogued among the irritable race; nor muſt you, my dear John, be ranked amongſt the ſnarlers of the day. From true criticiſm a poet ſhould not ſhrink; and falſe, can ultimately do him no harm. Let John's cenſure, therefore, rather animate Henry to triumph over what may be hyper-critical, and to remove from his compoſition what may be really objectionable."

CHAPTER XI.

FRIENDS AND FAVOURITES.

THE converſations on theſe and other ſubjects, however, were not confined to themſelves. There had ſubſiſted between the families of Clare and Fitzorton a long courſe of good offices, from a principle of amity, which had deſcended, pure and unabated, from father to ſon, for upwards of a century; during all which time the tradition

tradition of their houſes had not recorded one difference, ſocial, political, or religious; but, on the contrary, thoſe traditions diſplayed innumerable teſtimonies of the affection which knit them together: their parks joined each other; and the avenues of venerable oak, which led from one houſe to the other, opened on the view the ſeats of their mutual hoſpitality, and interchanged endearment.

Mr. Clare, the proprietor of the manor-houſe, did not tarniſh the virtues, nor miſapply the fortunes, which had deſcended to him. He had loſt his lady only a few months after their union, of which the ſole fruit was a living conſolation, blooming in his only child.

With reſpect to Mr. Clare's daughter, as it ſeems to be a ſettled convention betwixt romance writers and their readers, that the caſket ſhould be ſuited to the gem, the reader's fancy has, no doubt, already convened the loves and graces to meet and contribute each their ſhare of appropriate attraction. Now it did actually

happen

happen in life, and ſhall, therefore, be recorded in this hiſtory, that the perſon of Olivia Clare, was not unworthy of the mind, by which it was illumined.

Perſonal beauty, it has been ſaid, falls under one or other of theſe four heads--- Colour, form, expreſſion, grace; the two former of which have been conſidered as the body; the two latter as the ſoul of beauty. The young lady under our pencil had all theſe in very interesting proportions. Her complexion was of that bright brown, which the critics, on beauty, have determined gives luſtre to all other colours, a peculiar vivacity to the eyes, and to the whole look a richneſs, which is in vain ſought for in the whiteſt and moſt tranſparent ſkins. The radiance of thriving health ſhone forth upon every feature, and from her eyes beamed that gliſtening fire, which is only viſible in the morning of life.

Her diſpoſition was ſo artleſs, ſhe would have been an eaſy prey to the inſidious, had ſhe fallen amongſt the wicked, inſtead of

of the good. Such was her innocency, that it was as difficult for her to ſuſpect an ill in the heart of another, as to conceive any in her own; without the ſurfeiting of female ſentimentality, or the ſickening affectation of novel-born benevolence, ſhe was generous, confidential, ſimple, and ſincere.

A happy grace of nature to give to every thing its kindeſt conſtruction, was ſo impreſſed upon every lineament of Olivia's face, that had her countenance, or figure, wanted every other attraction, this alone muſt have rendered her an object of eſteem and admiration. So victorious, indeed, over all events, and occurrences, was this unpretending, but *all-ſubduing*, charm, that it was an inexhauſtible ſource of conſolation to herſelf and others.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XII.

FIRST FAMILY SECRET.

THE preference ſhown by this young lady to Henry Fitzorton, though ſhe tenderly loved the whole family, began to ſhow itſelf before ſhe was conſcious of any nice diſtinction in her own ſenſations. If ſhe preſented flowers, which uſed to be the offering of almoſt every day, inſomuch that a bouquet with the dew upon it graced the ſide of every cup upon the breakfaſt table, *that* deſigned for Henry was always arranged with the moſt care, and conſiſted of a more beautiful aſſemblage; nor did ſhe forget to blend in it a ſprig of laurel, or myrtle, to adorn her little poet. She would uſually chooſe him as her companion in a walk, and expreſs ſome little diſpleaſure, and mortification, if ſhe was not his choice in the dance.

At later periods ſhe would leave John to his philoſophical, and James to his legal, ſtudies, and wandering with Henry amongſt the

the woods, or meadows, diſcourſe on the witching ſubject of his muſe; not that ſhe was herſelf a votary, but that ſhe loved what moſt intereſted Henry Fitzorton. She was never ſo happy as when he permitted her to make tranſcripts of his verſes, get them by heart, and recite them at the Fitzorton fire ſide; ſhe would almoſt embrace thoſe who appeared touched with their merits, and diſcover the moſt pointed chagrin if they fell ſhort of making a ſuitable impreſſion; and once upon John's ſaying they were hardly good enough for the bellman at Chriſtmas, but might do well enough for a girl's thread-paper, ſhe burſt into tears, and did not ſpeak to him for almoſt an hour after.

Indeed John often aſſumed the critick in his judgment of Henry's poetry, and Henry in turn threw a dart, not without effect, at John's philoſophy. Olivia always ſided with the former. Sir Armine ſummed up; Mr. Clare ſmoaked his pipe, ſent forth a ſhrewd obſervation between the whiffs, ſometimes animated the combatants, ſome-

times

times arbitrated. James, juſt, ſenſible, and candid, tried to keep the youthful diſputants within bounds. Lady Fitzorton always gave the ſtrength of her remarks to the weak. Many were their literary contentions, ſerious and ſportive; ſuch of theſe as more immediately connected with their relative ſituations as ſons and brothers, their paſſions as friends or lovers, and their characters as men, will occaſionally be introduced.

As time ſtole on, and the brothers grew into men, the attachment of Olivia Clare to the youngeſt Fitzorton, was of a more intereſting, and deciſive kind; her tenderneſs aſſumed a more affecting form: it had gained more *power*, but produced leſs *happineſs*; it had loſt nothing of its innocence, but much of that gaiety and ſport by which it was before characteriſed. If *then* it was a roſe-bud in her boſom, it was *now* the ſame flower, more blown, more fragrant, perhaps, but ſurrounded by its thorns, whoſe puncture the heart wherein it grew and flouriſhed, began ſenſibly to feel. She

was

was reftlefs when apart from Henry, and yet troubled in his prefence; fhe caught, imperceptibly, all his ideas of delight and forrow; and their very genius feemed by more than inftinct, more than habit, to affimilate. The moon-beam, the mufe, the nightingale, the foft feafon of the twilight, the lapfe of the ftream, the figh of the zephyr, the turbulence of the ftorm, and the roar of the cataract, had long been his, and, at length, became her objects of enthufiafm. But whenever thefe fombrous charms gave way to brighter images, their reflected luftre would irradiate Olivia. The fathers faw what they prefumed was a fympathy in both. They nourifhed and looked forward to it as the only bond that could poffibly add ftrength and beauty to a friendfhip, that had been the growth of more than half a century.

Henry, however, who had all this time borne only the affection of a tender brother to his lovely affociate, was no fooner informed of the nature of *her* affection, and of the family *views* thereupon, than he

re-

remitted his ſtudies for the clerical office, and cheriſhed more than his wonted melancholy. The family views, however, not being yet declared formally, he collected the ſenſe of them from certain caſual hints, and ſportive inſinuations. Sir Armine would often ſay, in the hearing of Henry, when Olivia was miſſing, "Where is the Poeteſs? Corydon, what have you done with your Phillis?" and if Henry was abſent, nothing was more common than for one or other of the families, turning to Olivia, to exclaim, "Bleſs me! where is your intended?" They always were ſeated ſide by ſide at table, and if the one or the other were out of the way, the place was held ſacred, and, excepting a caſe of neceſſity, unoccupied. John, indeed, would, now and then, uſurp the chair, but a grave look from Olivia, would make him reſign it.

The aſſociation of ideas, indeed, was, by long habit, become ſo familiar, that the names of Henry and Olivia, were always mentioned together; and however involved

any

any other parts of the family might be in the queſtion then before them, it never happened that Olivia and John, or Olivia and James, were united, but Olivia and Henry, were ſure to come together; nay, they ſeemed in that order to be ſo properly placed, that it was difficult to tranſpoſe or mix them with any other, even when it was really neceſſary. John would exert, occaſionally, his confuſing talents, and thereby derange the plan for ſeveral minutes, coupling his own name with Olivia's, and joining together thoſe of Henry and his muſe, declaring, that *ſhe* only was the proper miſtreſs of a poet; but theſe perplexities produced more pleaſantry than vexation, and always ended by John's giving up the point.

CHAPTER XIII.

PERPLEXITIES.

THAT, however, which more ſtrongly marked the intention of both houſes was

Henry's diſcovery of the motive with which he and Olivia were left together; and not ſeldom ſuch excuſes of abſence made by the reſt of the families as plainly indicated that Henry and Olivia, were to be conſidered by every body as *lovers*; and, indeed, had any ſtronger proofs been wanting, the behaviour of Olivia, on theſe occaſions, when every word, look, and accent, betrayed her, would have been fully ſufficient. She imputed the ſudden, and unuſual, reſerve of Henry to the ſame motives that produced her own—an increaſe of that timidity which ariſes from the increaſe of innocent and conſcious love; and though no two emotions in nature could be more diſtinct than thoſe, which at that time governed their hearts, they produced, at the moment, a reſemblance ſo accurate that any obſerver might have miſtaken the one for the other. Fearful to offend, and alive to all the merits and graces of Olivia; convinced that her conduct, ſince he began to obſerve upon it, muſt, in a thouſand little inſtances, have ariſen from affection;

grate-

grateful for the virtuous happineſs his youth had received from the ſociety of one whom his heart had long ſince adopted as a ſiſter, and honoured by a ſentiment which he could not return, and which threatened to break in upon the felicity of both; Henry could not perſuade himſelf to an alteration of conduct, without, in ſome meaſure, accounting for it; and to do this would not only be the moſt formidable undertaking, in as much as it might affect Olivia, but as it would violate a ſolemn vow by which he had pledged himſelf for a certain ſeaſon, and which for eſpecial reaſons did not admit even of fraternal confidence; all, therefore, which could be done, in the preſent poſture of affairs, was to recede, imperceptibly as it were, from the degree of attention, which he had formerly ſhewn this lovely creature; and as he could not bear treating her with the ſemblance of unkindneſs, or of openly reſiſting thoſe opportunities which were ſo purpoſely thrown in his way, he had recourſe to other means; namely, to withdraw himſelf as of-

ten as he could from her ſociety.—Was any party of pleaſure propoſed? Henry was ſeized, on the ſudden, with ſo violent an head-ach, that it was impoſſible to join them. Did the gentle Olivia offer *her* ſervices in the character of his nurſe? "She was all goodneſs, but he could not endure company?" Was a freſh plan ſtarted upon his recovery? he feared adventuring too ſoon into the air might bring back his complaint. On theſe occaſions the ſturdy John always maintained "that the ſociety which was to be got by begging made the perſon invited appear too rich, and the beggar too poor; and that as he ſhould always conſider the company of another a fair exchange for his own, and no more, whether the ſpoiled child (ſo he ſometimes called Henry) went abroad or ſtaid at home, was, in his opinion, perfectly immaterial: at any rate *he* ſhould not condeſcend to turn *coaxer*:" at this Henry would ſhake his head; and Olivia thank her ſtars Henry was a poet not a philoſopher! Was Henry at any time tenderly

urged by *all* the reſt of the family in conſpiracy againſt him; and did a parent's ſoft authority control him? the language of refuſal was ever the hardeſt to Henry's heart; he obeyed, but was always compelled to return the worſe for it: the tears would guſh from his eyes in the midſt of the general hilarity; and the tender terrors of Olivia, her killing aſſiduities, and her unbounded affection, ſoon convinced him that ſtratagems of this kind could no longer avail.

Henry now meditated ſome excurſions remote from home, and eſpecially to ſuch of his young friends as he knew were acquainted with no other parts of the family. He had cheered his ſpirits, in the idea that this project would be more auſpicious than the reſt. He took, therefore, the firſt opportunity when his own family were aſſembled, and Olivia at the other houſe, to mention the probable good that might be produced by change of air, naming the perſon he intended to viſit. But in the very inſtant that Sir Armine nodded, as if

acceding to the propofal, Lady Fitzorton, in the moft unequivocal manner objected, as the very worft meafure he could adopt; "For, befides," faid fhe, "that the prefent unfavourable weather, my dear Harry, makes it madnefs for an invalid to go abroad; the houfe you would mention has not, I believe, had a well-aired bed in it thefe ten years. I therefore muft infift, as you value my life"—At this inftant Olivia came in. "Yes, I muft ferioufly infift Henry, that you do not hazard our lives, by rifking your own." The cheeks of Olivia, which were before tinted with the bloom of exercife, by a little excurfion fhe had taken from the caftle to the manor-houfe, became pale as death—"Hazard your life and his, madam! did you fay? Good heaven! what can he mean?" "Why, my dear, this—what fhall I call him? hufband that would-be, is, for aught I know, going to deprive himfelf of a handfome wife, and good mother at once." Olivia who had been infenfibly untying her cloak, now let it drop upon one arm—"Would you believe

believe it? this raſh Strephon, my dear, is going to leave us!" Olivia's cloak fell from her arm on the floor. "I did not think Henry would leave us—to-morrow is ſomebody's birth-day!" "Yours!" exclaimed Henry, "I had forgot it."—"Forgot it! had you?" replied Olivia, "Would then it were the day of my death!" Henry, rather tottered than walked towards her, took her gently in his arms, and kiſſing away her tears, "Happy be your birth-day, Olivia! Indiſpoſition—you know how ill I have lately been,—had hurried it a moment from my mind. I will ſtay to bleſs it! and could Henry's wiſhes prevail, its returns ſhould augment your felicity, until felicity could grant no more." Olivia raiſed her head at theſe accents, which ſeemed to have brought back not only the deſire of living, but life itſelf. She dropped involuntarily upon her knee, then riſing ſuddenly, influenced by the ſame emotion, and caſting an appealing glance, as if to juſtify her unſpeakable tenderneſs, and bluſhing ten thouſand virtues, ſhe ran into

the arms, which were thrown open to receive her. The two venerable fathers and lady Fitzorton left their ſeats, with one voice, exclaiming, " Bleſs! bleſs you together!" James ſtood by, and lifting up his hands to heaven, reiterated the bleſſing, " Bleſs! bleſs you together!"

Olivia was now as much overcome with joy, as before ſhe had been overborne by ſorrow. Lady Fitzorton received her from the arms of Henry, and every one aſſerted their right to enfold her. John, who happened to be at ſome diſtance, received her laſt; and though he was not eaſily moved, the whole ſcene had affected him deeply.

The thought of eſtabliſhing happineſs in that innocent boſom, which he had diſtreſſed by the appearance of unfriendly neglect, operated on the generous diſpoſition of the amiable Henry, ſo far as to produce a ſatisfaction in his mind, to which it had for ſome time been a ſtranger. Believing that he owed Olivia the atonement of unuſual attention, and not being in a ſituation to reflect, agreater degree of that ſoftneſs

ſoftneſs accompanied his manner, which was irreſiſtible, than he had for a long ſeaſon dared to indulge. His melancholy now took that penſive ſhade, whoſe magick communicated a charm, when it was ſo attempered, to every object around him; and this again melted gradually away, like thoſe thin miſts which often mingle in the ſun-beams. In the progreſs of the evening, he ſaid and did numberleſs things, which reconciled him to himſelf, and was ſo evidently felt as a full recompence by Olivia, that the one had evidently forgot he was diſplaying the fondneſs of a lover, and the other had every reaſon to ſuppoſe ſhe was the beloved object. Animated by theſe deluſions, this too was the night, on which, had not Henry's "oath been in heaven," and the ſecret of his heart along with it, Olivia muſt have triumphed; for never did ſhe look ſo fair; never did ſhe repeat with ſuch effect thoſe effuſions of the lyre, which ſhe knew were moſt in his own eſteem; never did ſhe ſtrike the chords of his favourite inſtrument with a touch ſo

tremblingly delicate; never did ſhe appear to feel ſo much love for Henry, an affection ſo fraternal for his brothers, nor ſo filial a reverence for his parents.

John, in the courſe of the evening, broke from company thrice, from ſudden indiſpoſition, but returned the inſtant he felt himſelf recovered, and contributed his quota to the general joy: the gaiety increaſed, the hours flew, and on Sir Armine hearing the clock ſtrike eleven, his uſual hour of retreat, he cried out, "Silence, tell-tale! you envy our happineſs, and would ſhorten it." "Rather," ſaid his lady, "command it to go faſter, that it may bring on the hour which gave birth to Olivia!"

As if this had ſuggeſted a new idea, Henry gave the rein to his creative fancy, and entering into the ſpirit of the harmony that touched them all, hurried them from one ſubject to another, until warning was given for the twelfth hour; immediately upon which, he filled a goblet of Burgundy, and, as the clock was ſtriking, drank it

on

on his knees, to the health and long life of Olivia Clare, "I muſt," ſaid he, "complain of your delay (though he had not even then parted with the bottle) and he ſwore that he could drink to the dregs, while ſuch a tardy fellow was filling his glaſs." This declaration he accompanied by three huzzas! which he inſiſted upon ſhould be joined by every one preſent.

The company were ſo taken up with the enthuſiaſm of his voice, action, and addreſs, and were ſo divided between one rapture and another, they had not time to think about themſelves. It was with difficulty that Olivia, betwixt one ſenſation and another, kept her little wits. She cried and laughed by turns; but both theſe emotions were the happy hyſtericks of the heart. She became pale and red alternately, and turning to lady Fitzorton, ſhe exclaimed half drowned in tears, "that ſhe was the happieſt creature upon earth!" Then winding up the affections of the evening, to their higheſt pitch, filled her own glaſs, and expanding her lovely arms

to the whole circle, exclaimed, "Bleſſed be ye all! and may the houſes of Fitzorton and of Clare be thus united for ever!"

John, who remained a few moments in the room, after the family had left it, ſat thoughtful—"My father is right; there can no longer be any doubt of their affection. My benediction, then ſhall not be withheld—Bleſs them together!"

CHAPTER XIV.

MISTAKES.

THESE little ebullitions of a heart, anxious to make full reſtitution for unintended offences, had, by this time, wrought ſo ſtrongly on the enthuſiaſm of Henry, that they accompanied him into his apartment, after the ſocial circle, highly in humour with each other, had diſperſed for the night. Before he cloſed his eyes, his imagination was on the wing, aſſiſted not a little, by the effects of the Burgundy, yet

yet more by the hilarity of the family, and above all, by the rich consciousness of having himself been the chief cause, and he invoked his muse, which, like the harp of David, was his constant refuge in time of trouble, or of joy, to celebrate the anniversary of Olivia's birth, by addressing to her a few stanzas which, but for that sweet prejudice of love, which applies every thing of this kind to itself, might have been looked upon as the tribute of an affectionate brother, " smit with the love of sacred song," to his most favoured sister.

STANZAS.

For thee, the firstlings of the year shall blow,
  And fond affection fling them at thy feet,
The opening buds a brighter bloom shall shew,
  And raise their heads, thy soft regard to meet.

Ah! happy task! along the vale of tears,
  To strew the path of those we love with flow'rs,
The Heart's-ease gay—the bud the myrtle bears,
  And Snow-drops glittering with the morning show'rs.

The thorn of care to pluck from Hope's fair rose,
  And bind it gently on the aching breast,
That while with ever blushing smile it glows
  The dews of pity on its leaves may rest.

After

After Henry had revifed and tranfcribed his performance, the hurry into which his fpirits had been thrown by the preceding fcenes, terminated in a found repofe. Not fuch the hiftory of the tender-hearted Olivia, after fhe bade her friends adieu. The excefs of her joy ftill continued, and banifhed fleep. Morpheus is a timid and quiet power, that dares not venture to fhed his opiates on the pillow, until the paffions themfelves are difpofed to reft. She would have thought the beft offers of that drowfy god a wafte of the precious hours. The fpirit of happy, and as fhe had every reafon to believe, of mutual love, kept her beautiful eyes unclofed. But, if Henry was lulled to reft while Olivia was without a wifh to partake it, fhe had the advantage of him, not only from prefent joy, but future delight; for he no fooner opened his eyes, than he faw, felt, and underftood, the mifchiefs to which the deliriums of the preceding evening would lead; and he had need of the refrefhments of fleep, and the renovations of ftrength and

life

life they brought with them, to ſupport him on the preſent day.

He awoke, as from a voluptuous, yet diſordered dream, after a night of intemperance. A train of circumſtances had taken place, which he foreſaw, would not only augment the paſſion of Olivia, but give her and the families reaſon to believe he had himſelf been acceſſary to its increaſe. "Heavens!" exclaimed he, ſtarting from his bed! "every ingredient I have adminiſtered, by way of antidote, has increaſed the force of the poiſon;—and this too is the birth-day of Olivia!"

He aroſe haſtily. The firſt object that engaged his attention was, the poetry which had given him ſo much generous joy in the compoſition. He now conſidered it as an abettor, in the general perplexity, and was upon the point of ſacrificing it to his reſentment, when Sir Armine and James came into his room. "I am here, Sir," ſaid his father, "to rebuke your idleneſs, when your miſtreſs and your muſe ought to have rouſed you

the firſt in the houſe. Your beloved has been tripping round the garden theſe two hours, and her charming bluſhes, which ſurpaſs the roſes ſhe has been culling for you, ingrate, upbraid your lazineſs!"

"Indeed, my dear Sir," replied Henry, as if willing to explain, "there is ſuch a complication of miſtakes—ſuch a ſtrange ſeries of—of—"

"Miſtakes!" rejoined his father, obſerving the verſes, that had been haſtily thrown on the dreſſing-table on his entrance—"Yes—yes, I ſee now in what the miſtakes conſiſt"—as I live, a poem to the 'lady Olivia's eye-brow'—ſee—Stanzas, ſacred to the birth-day of ——." Here, his father recited the firſt couplet, and then taking hold of Henry with one hand, and James with the other, hurried with them down ſtairs into the breakfaſt-parlour, but exclaiming at every ſtep, "I will loſe no time in clearing up theſe miſtakes I am determined."

He had ſcarcely opened the door of the apartment, in which the families were aſ-

ſembled,

ſembled, than he gave the anniverſary offering, to the ſweet Olivia. She had that moment finiſhed a fragrant tribute; herſelf far more lovely than the faireſt of the flowers ſhe had collected. Sir Armine, turning to Henry, exclaimed, "why doſt thou not offer them on thy knees, thou love-lorn Damon? Haſt thou forgot the proſtrations due to a goddeſs, when thou wouldſt ſacrifice?—but, I ſuppoſe, the poor trembling mortal is afraid leſt his offering ſhould prove unworthy of the ſhrine."

Thus was it rendered every way impoſſible for Henry to negative a word, and his very ſilence was naturally enough converted to the ſubmiſſive awe, which is apprehenſive it never can preſent any thing worthy the acceptance of a beloved object.

CHAP-

CHAPTER XV.

FLOWERS GATHERED BY LOVE.

INDEED, ſuch was the undiſguiſed ſincerity with which Olivia acknowledged, and ſuch the impaſſioned gratitude and ſweetneſs with which ſhe received the poetical tribute, it would have been more than churliſh in Henry, to have found utterance for a ſentence that might chill the innocent delight it had created; and this delight was ſo viſible in the whole countenance of Olivia, that ſome of its radiance ſeemed to be reflected back even upon John; who approaching her with one of his beſt bows, "albeit unuſed to the bending mood," ejaculated with unwonted fervor, "This is, my dear Olivia, the only moment of my regret, that the gods have not made me as poetical as Henry!—and if *he* had not invoked his muſe, I feel that I ſhould for the firſt, and probably, the laſt time of my life, have tried *my* hand

hand at an acroſtick at leaſt. From Apollo and the nine young goddeſſes I ſhould have had nothing to expect: for I was not born under a rhyming ſtar; neither would Aganippe, Helicon, nor Caſtaly, have done any thing for me: for I never was dipped in the ſtreams of fancy, nor could I have looked for better luck from Pegaſus or Parnaſſus: for I had never the art of managing a winged horſe, nor of clambering up an imaginary mountain; but if there is ought of inſpiration, in actual exiſtent beauty, grace, and goodneſs, ' as it lives, moves, and has a being,' in Olivia, *ſhe* ſhould herſelf have been both my ſubject and my muſe: and I will be judged even by Henry here," clapping his brother on the ſhoulder, "if ſuch inſpirations are not of more potency than all the fictions of the heathen mythology!"

This unexpected gallantry on the part of the philoſopher, as, on account of the debating ſpirit and ſententious gravity, they uſed to call him, enlivened the company.

To

To heighten the intereſt of all this, Lady Fitzorton, whoſe fine countenance illumined at ſome of the ſentiments of the birth-day verſes, began to read them aloud, pauſing at every ſtanza, as well to pay a juſt tribute to the genius of a beloved ſon, as to afford the reſt of the company opportunity to join in his praiſe. Yet ſhe whom it moſt concerned did not utter a ſyllable, nor was it neceſſary. The words of love it has been obſerved, ſleep in the ear that is too dull to comprehend its ſilence. A maxim happily verified in the countenance of our Olivia, whoſe eyes ſparkled, cheeks glowed, and tears dropt, ſo as to ſhew moſt eloquently the excellency and the graces of her nature. In addition to which, ſhe had, even in the ſelection of her bouquet, though not a poetick one, conſulted thoſe three great maſters of effect,—time, place, and circumſtance. Moſt of the flowers were emblematick, or could eaſily be brought to apply, to the caſe in point. The maiden's pride was relieved by the virgin's bluſh,

and

and this again was veiled in laurel leaves. The ſweet-brier, which has ſo ſtrong an alluſion to the pains and pleaſures of attachment, was ſkilfully placed in the midſt of a bunch of love-lies-bleeding, around which was entwined not only balm of Gilead, but plenty of double balſams, and over the whole were diſperſed heart's-eaſe and the maiden's delight.

CHAPTER XVI.

MYSTERY.

THUS did every moment tend to accumulate cauſes of ſatisfaction to the reſt of the ſociety, and increaſe the difficulty for Henry to breathe an accent of diſcontent; or to give any of his friends the ſmalleſt idea that ſuch diſcontent was in his boſom. The anniverſary hours paſſed ſmiling on, and although Henry could not be betrayed into the hilarities of the preceding night, when he wholly forgot himſelf in others:

others: although, neither the powers of wit, nor of wine, nor the more animating ſenſation of genius receiving its reward from beauty, love, and family affection, could allure him out of ſome memory of himſelf, he was too much wrought upon by ſeeing every face happy about him, to damp, by any ill-timed gravity, the general joy. On the contrary his behaviour was perhaps more touching even than before; for his exceſſive gaiety, which was rather a ſtrain upon his nature, and might be ſuppoſed to have left him ſomewhat exhauſted, was exchanged for a ſofter penſiveneſs of diſtreſs. Before the aſſembly broke up, however, his ſpirits rallied, his happy powers were again exerted, and when each perſon bade adieu to the other, it would have been difficult for a tranſient ſpectator to ſuppoſe there had been any aching hearts amongſt the company.

Some aching hearts, however, there were, and one of them throbbed in the breaſt of Henry. No ſooner had this devoted youth gained his own apartment, than the conſtrained

ſtrained part he had acted for ſuch a number of hours, ſo oppreſſed him, that a thouſand emotions at once ſtruggled for vent, and could be relieved only by a flood of tears. The hapleſs youth had done the utmoſt, that a regard for the happineſs of others could inſpire. He had yielded to occurrences not in his power to foreſee, or to obviate; and for two days together, without a poſſibility of preventing it, had been the ſacrifice of contingencies.

It is now high time we ſhould account for this extraordinary degree of miſery in Henry, while ſo many other dearly loved individuals of both families, were happy. The reader indeed, would have good reaſon to accuſe him of unpardonable caprice, or of ſtrange inſenſibility, if ſome motive, ſtrong as honour, and awful as fate, had not fixed in his mind an inſuperable objection to the plan, which was carrying on for his union with Olivia. In order, therefore, to juſtify his determined oppoſition to the family meaſures, it is neceſſary the reader ſhould now be informed of that

ſecret which he held ſacred, and "pluck out the heart of his myſtery."

And yet we have hitherto employed ourſelves in bringing the reader acquainted with ſo many good and benign characters, and ſeating him by their comfortable and ſocial fire-ſide, in a manner, like one of the family: that it is not without regret, we are now to lead him farther into the neighbourhood; where he muſt meet with ſome perſons of a different deſcription. But if Paradiſe had its ſerpent and its fiend, it cannot fairly be expected, that Fitzorton Caſtle ſhould have been without ſomething to denote its being placed in a mixed and imperfect world.

We mentioned a third manſion, within the view of Fitzorton Caſtle, and the Manor-houſe of Clare. This edifice, was called Guiſe-abbey, the immediate poſſeſſor of which, was Sir Guiſe Lorrain Stuart, whoſe anceſtors had been amongſt the partizans of the Queen of Scots, while thoſe of Sir Armine, had diſtinguiſhed themſelves as the moſt zealous ſupporters

in

in the rival army. Sir Guiſe had ſtill in his family, ſeveral reliques of the Princeſs, who is ſaid, by hiſtorians, to have been unmatched in beauty, and unequalled in misfortune.

The fillet and veil that bound the beauteous eyes of the Scottiſh Queen, the rich habit of ſilk and velvet, in which ſhe arrayed her lovely form, and the ivory crucifix, which ſhe held in her hand on the morning of her execution, were yet preſerved in an apartment called Mary's room. On the other hand, and with no leſs pride of character and blood, Sir Armine enrolled in the line of his anceſtors, the chancellor, who affixed the ſeal to the warrant for Mary's death; another kinſman, was one of the Earls to whom the fatal inſtrument was confided, with orders to ſee the bloody commiſſion, which it bore, duly executed: and the portraits of theſe perſons, were ſtill to be ſeen at the abbey.

Nor had the houſe of Guiſe, or of Fitzorton, been more zealouſly attached to the

domeſtic conflicts, which happened between thoſe rival ſovereigns, Elizabeth and Mary, than to their religious tenets.

The firſt ſevere ſhock their friendſhip received, was occaſioned by a very fierce conteſt, that ſprung up after dinner, at the Abbey, on the very day that Sir Armine made the overture viſit, deſigned to eſtabliſh a good underſtanding between them as gentlemen and neighbours, however little they might accord in matters of Church or State. After Sir Guiſe had drank "forgetfulneſs of the paſt," in a half pint bumper of claret, he aſſerted, "that, to ſhew his neighbour all was obliviated, although he would drink three more half pints to the memory of Queen Mary:"—here, he filled and emptied with ſpeed;—"Sir Armine was welcome to pay what homage he pleaſed to her murderer!" Sir Armine reddened.

But, Sir Guiſe, before the meeting, had poured down his throat nearly the quarrelling quantity. Sir Armine bore it long, with right chriſtian patience, moving now

and then in his chair, ſtriking a tune with his fingers on the table, and twice ſhifting his ſeat, grinding however, at different pauſes, the indigeſtible word " murderer !" " Why, that ſhe was a moſt foul murderer in this inſtance," reiterated Sir Guiſe, filling his glaſs ; " I preſume, there is not a man living will dare to deny." " I dare, Sir," returned Sir Armine, bounding up, and taking half the room at a ſtride. " Then who was ?" retorted Sir Guiſe ; " Mary ! your Mary !" " 'Tis falſe, Sir !" replied Sir Guiſe, hurrying down another bumper, from whoſe aid he derived a courage not his own ;—" By the illuſtrious ſpirit of her, whoſe wrongs fill my ſoul, no leſs than her blood my veins, 'tis falſe !"—here he ſtruck the table with his ſpread hand, and threw the glaſs in which he had been drinking, on the ground :—" wiſhing,"—as he ſtampt upon the fragments, " that all the enemies of that ill-fated woman were cruſhed into duſt in the like manner." Sir Armine threw up the ſaſh for air, then rang violently :

on a ſervant's appearing, he "ordered his carriage," in a voice ſcarcely articulate, folding his trembling hands, and turning up his flaſhing eyes, as if to implore the ſuccour of the God of long-ſuffering, to grant him a few more moments of patience. But Sir Guiſe, unwilling to loſe the time before him, adopted the worſt character that hiſtory has recorded of Sir Armine's heroine, riſing in his aggravations at every word.

Sir Armine oppoſed to this, the reverſe of the picture, ranſacking the inexhauſted ſtores of his memory, for thoſe hiſtorical teſtimonies of this Princeſs's activity, prudence and diſcernment: "but above all," added he, "her vigorous and immortal defence, and eſtabliſhment of religion—a proteſtant Queen, led as it were by the hand of the Almighty to a proteſtant throne, even till popery became her footſtool."

"I ſay," cried Sir Guiſe, ſtarting up and ſtaggering; "I ſay, with the beſt hiſtorians, the whole exiſtence of this queen, this pretended

tended virgin, was a tiſſue of falſehood, inſincerity, and cunning." He then run into an elaborate defence, equally intemperate, of the queen of Scots, contraſting it with the moſt violent ſarcaſms on Elizabeth.

This burſt of acrimony called forth all that was irritable in Sir Armine. "O ſhame where is thy bluſh! can ſhe find a vindicator at this time of day: and a vindicator in one who aſpires to the friendſhip of Sir Armine Fitzorton—Fie upon it, Sir Guiſe!—Are then the credulous Darnley, the execrable Bothwell, the abandoned Rizzio, the infamous Douglas all forgotten? Are the ſelf-condemning letters, ſeductive ſonnets, and ſeditious pacquets, all vaniſhed from your memory?"

"Lies! lies! forgeries! damnable forgeries!" raved Sir Guiſe, "all deeds of darkneſs worked in that gulf of ſin the ſoul of Elizabeth! Did not your cloth protect you"—"My cloth is no protection," replied Sir Armine, "nay, 'tis my proper robe of defence, and reminds me of the

duty of punifhing a defamer of the glorious defender of the faith I profefs, and of the holy religion of which I am a minifter"—"But," continued Sir Armine, fomewhat recovering himfelf, "I have done with you for ever, Sir—it is well for thee that the blood of the Fitzortons, rather than that of the Stuarts, fills my veins." This menace had effect enough on Sir Guife to make him congratulate himfelf on the departure of the menacer.

This fpecimen of their political difference, indeed, is allowed a place merely to fhew an important feature in the difpute between the families; but we muft, thus early, enter a caveat againft the reader's expecting any more on the fubject, unlefs, by tranfient reference, it may be neceffary; as it is by no means our intention to mix domeftick annals with controverfial hiftory, on a point that will probably remain in violent contention to the end of time.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XVII.

A BAD NEIGHBOUR.

WITH reſpect to the perſonal accompliſhments of Sir Guiſe Stuart, they were yet ſufficiently attractive to be numbered amongſt the ſhining ſnares that involved his admirers.

Conſidering the excellence of his conſtitution, which even the ſuicidal hand of intemperance had not been able hitherto to undermine, the Baronet might ſtill be ſaid to enjoy the prime of life. Although he was by nature ſtubborn, he became flexible by art; ſuperficial in underſtanding, but profound in deceit; by means of which he won not only the eſteem of a nobleman eminent for his knowledge of mankind, but the love of that nobleman's heir and only child Matilda, with whom Sir Guiſe received fifty thouſand pounds on the day of marriage, and the like ſum the year following at her father's death.

Select, reader, from amongst the productions of nature some flower as the emblem of softness, humility, fragrance, and beauty; give to it that unresisting, and appealing delicacy, which trembles at the gale that it perfumes, and thou wilt have a just idea of Matilda Edgecumbe.

Then call to thy imagination some noxious, but fair looking, plant, able, from the strength of its stem, and vigour of its foliage, to endure the rudest storm, extending its "marriageable arms" to protect the lovely flower; a while that flower seems to thrive under its shelter, but soon the bitter and oppressive leaves, overwhelm with their shade, and blast with their poisonous qualities, all that are beneath. Hence wilt thou gain some feeble image of Matilda's husband. Who is feared by all the weak, says a philosopher, despised by all the strong, and hated by all the good, may securely say to himself, no matter! if there be no other rascal left on earth, I am still one: the Baronet might very safely give himself this consolation. The impracti-

impracticable temper and offensive manners of Sir Guise Stuart, his habits of riotous loquacity, or of sullen gloom, soon loosened his hold on all good men: nor had he indeed been even on conversation terms with the Fitzortons or Clares for some years. Anxious indeed to live in charity and peace with all mankind, and from the goodness of his own disposition, as well as from a consciousness of his own infirmity, always imputing to himself a share in the cause of estrangement, Sir Armine had so far alleviated the party rage produced by discussion of the merits of the two Queens, as to give Mary's champion a meeting some time after at the manor-house, in the lifetime of Mrs. Clare, who had been intimate with Lady Stuart's mother: and then it was that Olivia Clare, and the female part of the Abbey family, were for a few days thrown together; and an unbroken amity would on their part have ensued, particularly between the ladies, had not the stormy Sir Guise thrown, as usual, an intercepting cloud over the prospect.

Unable ſincerely to forget or to forgive what paſt on the ſubject of Mary and Elizabeth, or indeed any injury, yet wanting the manly courage, honeſtly to reſent it, he did every thing that in him lay to make the contiguity of the eſtates of thoſe families to the Abbey lands matter of diſpute; yet at once aſhamed and afraid to diſcloſe the real motives, he added falſehood to malice, in the daſtardly hope of covering them.—Under pretence of removing diſagreeable objects, he demoliſhed ſeveral pictureſque fragments and ruins, which had been of great effect in different points of view from the caſtle. From Sir Armine's pleaſure ground, the eye could, formerly, take in a fine cataract, which rolled down the rocks through the foreſt, the obſtructions of which had been cleared away by Sir Guiſe's father on purpoſe to enrich the proſpect: this alſo, giving out that it muſt certainly annoy eyes and ears, the imperious Baronet obſcured, with ſuch *malice, of deſign*, that inſtead of a cataract the eye was offended by an invidious ſcreen of

of clay, ill thatched and purpoſely diſfigured, ſo as to reſemble the dead blank of an enormous barn; he gave it the air of tumbling to pieces, becauſe he ſaid his neighbour loved ruins, and theſe were a ſubſtituted improvement on the fragments he had before taken away. Various openings in the foreſt gave peeps of ſeveral towns, ſpires, and buildings, and all theſe were likewiſe cloſed; and the abbey itſelf, which formed one of the nobleſt objects to the caſtle, was by one contrivance or another, even to Sir Guiſe's own inconvenience, ſo intercepted, as to be completely ſhut out from obſervation. One aſpiring tower at the top of the abbey,—which he remembered, in the days of intercourſe, to have heard Sir Armine obſerve had ſtood as a memorial of the friendſhip of their progenitors, and truſted it would remain ſuch to their poſterity,—he encloſed in a wooden caſe, becauſe he inſidiouſly ſaid it would *preſerve* it, though in effect it became an object of even more deformity than it had ever been of beauty. The

ſpirit which incited him to theſe acts of ſubordinate meanneſs being treated with manly contempt by Sir Armine, his neighbour's malignity became more diſcoverable in matters of greater conſequence; he forbade his wife, children, and every part of his family, or domeſticks, to mix with, or ſpeak to, thoſe of Fitzorton, or Clare, on peril of his utmoſt reſentment; warned both houſes not to treſpaſs on his manors; ſet up a pack of harriers and fox-hounds, though a fearful rider, and no ſportſman, and, to the deſtruction of nurſeries, fences, and plantations, ran the dogs and game to the gates of the caſtle.

In one of theſe purſuits, Sir Armine, who had been at that time enjoying the peace of benevolence, and the beauty of nature, with his ſon John, in his own grounds, was ſo exaſperated at the wanton triumph of Sir Guiſe, as he rode by him full ſpeed, blurting the mud in his face, though no game had been found, that John, lifting up the cane with which he had been walking ſhook it at the Baronet,

and

and exclaimed in an almoſt whiſpering voice, "Villain! there wanted but this, and I thank thee for it, even though at the price of an inſult to my father! I am thy debtor!" Sir Guiſe, who was within hearing of the menace, turned his horſe ſuddenly, and in the head-long fury of his vengeance, forgetting his uſual diſcretion, rode round both the father and ſon in a circle ſo narrow, as almoſt to cover them within length of his whip. Guiding his horſe ſo as to draw him ſtill nearer, John caught the ſkirts of the coat, and had nearly diſmounted him, when Sir Guiſe ſpurring the horſe with great violence, backing him at the ſame time, the animal was forcibly drawn upon the venerable Armine, who, in falling, received a blow in the left ſide, and might have been trampled to death, had not John Fitzorton, at the hazard of his own life, ſtruck the horſe with ſuch force as to make him ſpring forward and throw the rider. "Coward! aſſaſſin!" muttered John, but ſtill with governed articulation, "did not a ſupe-

a ſuperior duty claim my firſt attentions, I would chaſtiſe thee as I ought!" John held in his arms his fainting father while he ſpake, then carried him to the park-cottage, caſting over him a look of love and terrour, that for the moment abſorbed his indignation.

Of this blow Sir Armine fell ſick, and underwent a tedious confinement; in the courſe of which the tender love borne to the venerable man by his own family, and that of the Clares', was variouſly manifeſted. Lady Fitzorton, and the gentle Olivia, were, by turns, his nurſe. John preſerved the virtues of his character. He had for motives which will be explained, recently entered the army, and but for this accident, was about to join his regiment; and Henry, though at this time more frequently, and for a greater length of time abſent, diſcovered, whenever he appeared, a degree of trouble and anxiety even ſuperior to that of John. James was in London.

No ſooner had Sir Armine quitted his bed, than he ſummoned John into his apart-

apartment, and desiring him to sit down near enough to receive confidential discourse, "My dear John," said the good man, "I have selected you from the rest of my sons, not because I love you better, but because there is in you more of that firmness which I have occasion to employ. I need not inform you that the family of which you are a part, never incurred disgrace, or suffered dishonour—a character unimpeached, and unimpeachable, has, for more than six hundred years, been as its crest, and has reared itself amongst the best and proudest of honourable ancestry—honourable not simply from titles—for what are they but the shadow of a shade?—but from soul-ennobling action, and I trust it shall descend to you, and your posterity, without a stain.—At the present moment, however, you cannot but know a stain there is of the foulest nature cast upon it. My son I shall in a few days be in a situation to wipe it away. I abhor all impotent menaces, and, therefore, I spake not of this till the power was added to the will; but

but even now that they are preparing to unite, besides that I hold the modern decisions in scorn, let me honestly pour myself into your bosom. I am terrified at the ideas I had formed in wrath—they were impious. You are not to learn the duty of a christian pastor—and, though the laws of private honour, like those of fate, are unalterable, how can I obey them? To-morrow I am allowed to air, of course to-morrow should be the day of clearing your birth-right; but I dare not meet, as in a secular character I should, the ruffian who has polluted it. Until the hour was almost at hand, I indulged the anger-born error of personal vengeance; but should a minister of the gospel of peace, whose weapons are meekness and forbearance, presume to take into his own hand"--"Sir," interposed John, "were the measure sanctioned, it would be unnecessary." "Unnecessary!" exclaimed Sir Armine, who rose and walked across the room for the first time since his illness, unsupported. "Ill should I deserve your confidence, had I per-

I permitted the ſpot of which you ſpeak to remain ſo long on us, ſaid John." Sir Armine's colour gathered in his cheek—" Explain, Sir!" cried he: John diſappeared, but returning, gave an inſtrument to Sir Armine, ſaying " It was this, Sir, which cut out our ſtain—See it is ſpotted with the blood of Sir Guiſe Stuart."

" Dead! I truſt in God, not dead!" exclaimed his father, unſheathing the ſword with one hand, and graſping the arm of John with the other, ſometimes looking at the ſword, and ſometimes at his ſon. " The triumph of an ignoble mind going on, perhaps, to our diſgrace, I ſought and met the aggreſſor, with his ſon Charles. I told him I came as my father's repreſentative. The villain would have fled; but partly by ſhame, partly by force, he raiſed his arm, and we fought. I pierced his breaſt, and ſhould have gained his worthleſs heart, but that he threw down his ſword, and with a coward's ſpeed, fled to the abbey." " We are alone, Mr. Fitzorton," ſaid Charles, " this is an affair that admits not parly." He

threw

threw himſelf into a poſture of attack; "Unleſs, Charles, you think the blood of an honeſt man can expunge the infamy of a ſcoundrel," replied I, "it would be well to deſiſt." The brave youth pauſed, and ruſhed into my arms: he felt too powerfully for utterance. I gave him my hand: he wept with tenderneſs, and bluſhed with ſhame.

The varied emotions and paſſions which Sir Armine had undergone, during this explanation, added to the length of the pauſes, in which he was obliged to indulge himſelf, kept him cloſeted with John until the family began to ſuſpect it was occaſioned by his having relapſed, and by John's endeavours to reſtore him without alarming them. Lady Fitzorton, therefore, haſtened into the library, attended by James, Mr. Clare, Olivia, and Henry. Sir Armine, hearing them on the ſtairs, ordered John to throw open the door, and ſcarce giving them time to enter, he leaped up in an exſtacy, exclaiming to his wife—"Madam, embrace your ſon; to him you

owe

owe the eternal ſhame of the Stuarts, and the glory of the Fitzortons.—Boys, acknowledge a brother, who has reſcued your father, yourſelves, and your poſterity."

At the name of the Stuarts, Henry turned paler than death, and upon his exclaiming, " Has any thing, Sir, happened to the Stuarts?"—

" That has happened, boy," rejoined Sir Armine, " which"—" Your pardon, Sir, interpoſed John, the name of Charles Stuart, a brave young man, a brother officer, and the friend of Henry, is involved in this affair, and it ſhould not be talked of. Indulge and honour me ſo far as to forbear again the diſcuſſion.—Our father, you know, my brother, is always too good, and gives to common duties immeaſurable rewards."

He ſpoke with a dignity that demanded obedience, even from a parent, and left the room. " Noble youth!" exclaimed his father, " my praiſe, my gratitude, my bleſſing follow thee!"

Soon after this occurrence, the quarrel

ſettled

ſettled into an inveteracy, ſo generouſly avowed on the part of Sir Arminè, and ſo meanly clandeſtine on that of Sir Guiſe, there was not left the ſmalleſt hope of the breach being repaired. Thus, religion, manners, and morals, ſeparated this turbulent and overbearing man from the worthy Fitzortons.

Yet had this turbulent and overbearing man a daughter, who in mind and manners contraſted her father. Caroline Stuart to the brighteſt powers of the intellect, adjoined the ſofteſt affections of the heart; nor, had her cultivated endowments taken any thing from that touching ſimplicity, which is the charm of female youth. Her face was leſs exactly beautiful than that of Olivia Clare; but was of that intereſting kind, it was impoſſible to be looked upon, without a certain tenderneſs, to which every feature of it laid claim. Her eyes, though wanting the effulgence that beamed from thoſe of Olivia, were of a luſtre ſo extremely mild, that they appealed to the protection of every beholder, and ap-

pealed

pealed not in vain. Her shape had leſs of majeſty, but more of grace, than that of Olivia. Her whole figure, indeed, wanted Olivia's dignity, but poſſeſſed a no leſs attractive eaſe.

In one part of Caroline's character, there ſeemed to be an inconſiſtency. Although her heart overflowed with the moſt melting ſenſibility, her mind was ſo firm, as to have rarely abated any thing in thoſe points, which ſhe had eſtabliſhed as matters of duty —and this was carried, from her earlieſt days, to ſuch an extreme, that while her heart appeared properly to belong to her as one of the moſt tender of her own ſex, her mind, for by that word can we only make the diſtinction, ſeemed to form the moſt intrepid feature of what has been thought heroic in ours. Thus, for inſtance, no tyranny of her father, whoſe ſtern commands might be expected to ſhake the nature of ſo gentle a being, ever gave the air of reluctant obedience. "Diſpoſe of the life you gave, Sir," ſhe would ſay, "as you pleaſe, I ſubmit."—She often felt the wrong, foreſaw the

the conſequence, in ſecret mourned the error, but never queſtioned the authority. "Implicit obedience," has ſhe been heard to obſerve, "might be weakneſs rather than ſtrength in me; but in this caſe, I do not belong to myſelf, and where the author of my exiſtence is concerned, I feel myſelf as having no judgment, no will, no reaſon, nor any of thoſe faculties, which, in every other circumſtance of life, I am free to exerciſe."

CHAPTER XVIII.

A DAUGHTER.

THE reader has anticipated the power of Caroline Stuart over the heart of Henry Fitzorton. He ſees that ſhe was a ſucceſsful rival of the no leſs amiable Olivia; not that her character correſponded more with that of Henry, for it was, in ſome reſpects, leſs congenial; there had happened in early life one circumſtance, which exalted Caroline above all compariſon on the throne

throne of Henry's affections, and eſtabliſhed her there too ſtedfaſtly for the whole ſex to ſupplant her, even had every other woman been an Olivia. Caroline had the advantage of a firſt impreſſion. She had been the ſecret goddeſs of his idolatry a whole year, before his other little playmate; and though not an inmate of his family, the houſes of Fitzorton and Stuart having become formal viſitors prior to this æra, yet had Henry, who happened to be in friendſhip with Charles, the only ſon and only favourite of Sir Guiſe, frequent opportunities of ſeeing and converſing with little Caroline. Olivia Clare was at that time with a relation in London, her mother being then recently dead.

What mighty revolutions in human affairs have not twelve months, twelve days produced? In caſes of the heart, a ſingle hour has ſometimes decided its choice, even beyond the power of mortal change.

Lady Stuart had all the meekneſs of her daughter, but none of her magnanimity. Her ſpirits ſunk before the brutal violence

of

of her huſband, who, when he did not find it for the intereſt of ſome favourite point to be gloomily ſilent like an inſidious calm, was vehement as an hurricane, that deſolates every thing in its path; and poor lady Stuart was driven in terror before it, as the atom is driven by the whirlwind: whereas little Caroline ſuſtained the ſhock, unmoved, without oppoſing it. It is hard to ſay which conduct moſt exaſperated Sir Guiſe: that of his lady he regarded as contemptible weakneſs; and he heſitated not to pronounce that of his daughter, obſtinate ſtupidity. The terrors of his wife, terminated in that uncomplaining miſery, which is dumb through fear; and he frequently ſwore Caroline wanted voice, only becauſe ſhe wanted feeling. This deciſion incited him to new modes of tyranny, to innovations in the art of tormenting. But if the behaviour of Sir Guiſe was thus odious, that of young Caroline was in the ſame proportion admirable. The tempeſt whoſe rage ſhe could not appeaſe, ſhe never controuled;—when-

ever, therefore, ſhe perceived the ſtorm bearing hard on the tender ſpirits of lady Stuart, ſhe drew her imperceptibly, on ſome pretence or other, into the ſhelter of another apartment; and that Sir Guiſe might not be more furious, wanting an object whereon to wreak his vengeance, which is always the laſt aggravation of ſuch a temper, ſhe returned in haſte, and uſually remained till the violence abated; when, like the angel of mediation, ſhe haſtened to comfort her trembling mother. To theſe ordeals of Caroline, was Henry often witneſs.

Yet was this contemptible tyrant what a certain diviſion of ſociety calls a pleaſant companionable man, who could be gay, flexible, and almoſt forget his nature in general company. It was only at home that he followed thoſe baneful and malignant impulſes, which, like obſtructed torrents, are the more overwhelming for being repreſſed. "The moſt abhorred thing in nature," ſays a profound writer, with the moſt penetrating truth, "is the face that

ſmiles abroad, and flaſhes fury when it returns to the lap of a tender, helpleſs family:" Such was Sir Guiſe Lorrain Stuart.

In one of his moſt ſtormy ebullitions of paſſion, accompanied, as they always were when he dared to vent them, with the loudeſt vociferations, his terror-ſtricken wife ſunk ſubdued at his foot, which, with exaſperating inſult, he raiſed to ſpurn her. "God!" cried lady Stuart, "he will kill me!" Caroline, who perceived the deſign, threw herſelf between, and received the blow upon her lovely arm: but inſtead of attending to the pain, ſhe extended it to her father, while ſhe raiſed and ſupported lady Stuart with the other, then kiſſing the face of her mother, and preſſing the half-reluctant hand of her father to her lips until ſhe had drawn it, inſenſibly, to thoſe of his wife, ſhe held it there until it had received a token of forgiveneſs, to which it was no way entitled. But this failing to effect her purpoſe completely, ſhe perceived it was the moment to change her attack, and looking at the bruiſe of her

arm ſmilingly, and in a tone apparently betwixt jeſt and earneſt, ſaid to it,—" a fine mark to be ſure—no matter for that! if you were the means of gaining a reconciling kiſs from my father, and making him and my mother good friends only for this fortnight to come, you have my leave to be black and blue theſe twenty years!" Then, lifting it ſportingly again to the lips of Sir Guiſe, joining his hand at the ſame time to that of lady Stuart, now within reach, ſhe exclaimed—" There, Sir, the colours are fixed you ſee already; you have ſpoiled me a dozen conqueſts, at leaſt, at our next ball; but I have gained a victory," drawing her father's arm round his wife's neck, " worth a thouſand of them, and ſo the beauty of my poor dear arm is much at your diſpoſal, Sir, whenever you pleaſe." —By this time, lady Stuart like a ſpirit of peace, yet ſhrinking almoſt from herſelf, was brought by Caroline into the embrace of Sir Guiſe, who, relaxing of his rigour, condeſcended with ſullen humility to ſay, " Madam, I beg your pardon, but you are

ſo curſed timid and frighted, it always throws me into a paſſion; yet this lioneſs in ſheep's cloathing, weathers it out you know, let the winds and waves do what they will, and ſhe will have her way, though one were ready to expire with vexation."

Caroline who always knew her opportunity, ſaw this was the criſis to gain more, and as her gentle heart was by no means ſatisfied, ſhe changed her battery again, and with additional vivacity ſaid—" Yes, Sir, but you do not get off ſo. I have you now"—tightening her handkerchief in a true-lover's knot, " and I proteſt I will not let you ſtir an inch until you have aſked her ladyſhip's pardon as you ought to do. Come, Sir, put your hands together prettily, in this manner, for inſtance"—

Sir Guiſe, betwixt contending and yielding, ſuffered her to fold his hands in a praying poſture—" Well, what nonſenſe next?" cried he, with a ſoftened kind of growl.

" I vow," added Caroline, " I never ſaw any thing ſo well become you, Sir, as good humour.

humour.—Tell me, Madam, is not he quite handſome when he ſmiles? if you do not reward him for it, you do not deſerve it."

Here ſhe playfully put both their faces together, and Sir Guiſe was almoſt human. The gentle Matilda was paſſive in his arms, but neither inſenſible of her huſband's extorted kindneſs, nor of her charming Caroline's generous interceſſion.

A little ſtratagem atchieved the reſt of her duteous purpoſe, and ſettled her ſavage ſire this once into unwonted cordiality. "Good gracious!" cried ſhe, dropping on a chair, and from thence on the carpet, "what can be the matter with me? I am certainly going into an hyſterick."—Sir Guiſe, taken in his beſt humour and by ſurprize, was on his knees to aſſiſt her, perceiving which, and quitting the part of the ſick lady, ſhe bounded up with the lightneſs of a ſylph, and holding Sir Guiſe to his kneeling poſture, declared that was the very attitude in which he ought, for the laſt time of aſking, to beg Lady Stuart to

forgive him, which betwixt the pleaſantry of the ſally, and the ſubmiſſive ſweetneſs of his wife, who involuntarily dropt on her knees, as if aſhamed to ſee him on his, he did not wholly without grace; after which the triumphant Caroline danced, ſung, and tripped round them as if ſhe had completed the conqueſt of the globe. In the fulneſs of her felicity ſhe wept. O Alexander! what, at the unſatisfying termination of thy victories, was thy tear to that which fell from the lovely eyes of Caroline Stuart!

At other times when her own efforts miſcarried, or met from her father ill-mannered repulſe, ſhe would employ the mediation of her brother Charles, whoſe goodneſs of diſpoſition was no more to be warped by undue indulgence, than was that of Caroline by undue ſeverity. Beſides which, Charles Stuart tenderly honoured his mother, and loved his ſiſter. He was always, therefore, conſidered by Caroline as the *dernier reſorte*, in ſuch family ſtırb ances a baffled her own efforts; and whenever theſe heavy ſtorms aroſe, ſhe has

has introduced Charles into the apartment where the tempeſt raved, at the exact criſis, ſometimes when Sir Guiſe thought him out of reach, and more than once when that amiable youth had threatened never to ſee his unrelenting father again; nay, ſometimes, ſhe has been known to ſend off a private expreſs to him, ſtating, "that his immediate preſence could ſave his mother from vengeance." On theſe occaſions ſhe would empty her little purſe, to reward the meſſenger; or when Henry was viſiting at the abbey, during the important impreſſive twelve months, ſhe would give him the commiſſion, which the good-natured youth would execute with incredible ſpeed, and arrive with his friend Charles: the latter no ſooner made his appearance than Sir Guiſe was charmed, as if by ſome magick power that had his ſavage nature in controul. His violent ecſtaſies at ſeeing his ſon, and his dread at loſing him, were ſo great, that he ſeldom enquired into the abruptneſs of the viſit, but welcomed him with open arms, the more

 eſpecially

eſpecially if Caroline happened to be by, in the hope ſo decided a preference might add to her mortification. Little, however, was he ſkilled in the temper of his noble-minded daughter. Superior to the ordinary jealouſy which ſuch favouritiſm in parents ſometimes excites in children, ſhe ſecretly triumphed in her father's predilection for her brother, whom ſhe called the general peace-maker of the family. And as Charles was paſſionately fond of muſic—ſhe would exert her utmoſt ſkill, and ranſack all her little ſtores of harmony to detain him at the abbey. She would, moreover, ſometimes call in Henry to the aſſiſtance of her own powers, in order to render her brother's continuance at the abbey more pleaſant to him.

But when Charles entered the army, and was abſent with his regiment in diſtant quarters, which was at an early period, it was her cuſtom to walk herſelf to the neighbouring poſt houſe, at the diſtance of a ſhort mile from the abbey, and receive the letters for the family. It was a tender

compact

compact between the brother and ſiſter to make the latter alone the correſpondent of the former, ſo that ſhe was the medium of all tidings from Charles and Sir Guiſe, who, though a general ſeal-breaker, never had the courage to uſe open violence with his ſon's letters. With one of theſe, therefore, ſhe would reward his kindneſs, or rather his leſs degree of harſhneſs; for he was never kind to her mother—with another ſhe would threaten him into better treatment—with a third bribe beguile him into ſomething like civility; and, in ſhort, by theſe and a thouſand other innocent manœuvres, ſhe would ſometimes abate, ſometimes prevent, his anger, and always receive the heavieſt weight of it herſelf, when to prevent or abate it was impoſſible.

CHAPTER XIX.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

IF the reader takes into confideration the youth, fufceptibility, genius, and native foftnefs of Henry Fitzorton, he will think the firft fond emotions of his heart towards this fair object inevitable; and if again he reflects on that young man's amiable endowments of mind and perfon, he will believe it as unavoidable for him to have had fuch almoft conftant intercourfe, without her becoming fenfible of his virtues and graces in return. To Caroline, Henry addreffed the firft infpirations of his infant mufe—" He lifped in numbers, for the numbers came:" from Caroline he received the firft fmile of woman that ever reached his heart—and as the tears of virtue fell on her cheek, after any ftrong exertion of filial duty that left her fpirits exhaufted, they feemed to drop upon his very foul, melting it to foftnefs like her own—from Caroline he received the firft

ideas

ideas of female beauty, grace, goodneſs, and affection—from her he drew his heroines and his goddeſſes! She even outwent his very fictions as a poet, and his viſionary powers all borrowed their beſt magick from the real Caroline. Did he wiſh to deſcribe the gentleneſs of his heroine? it was the gentleneſs of Caroline—to give her firmneſs of ſoul? He gave her Caroline's.—Did he deſire to adorn her with the fineſt eyes? He attempted to deſcribe the eyes of Caroline—the faireſt complexion? it was Caroline's.—Shape? Who could be ſo good a model as Caroline?—Voice? Where could ſuch dulcet notes be found as attended the accents of Caroline? —In a word, ſhe was in every acceptation of the term—his 'firſt love;' yet ſtrange as it may ſeem to many readers, who are, perhaps, by this time prepared for declarations of love, many months paſſed in this endearing interchange without his once having ſaid—"Caroline, I love you, Caroline!" She was the innocent inchantment of his life: he ſaw her in the magick

 moments

moments of her grief, and there was little doubt but the faſcination was reciprocal; yet a certain delicate terror prevented both from declaring what each perfectly ſaw, felt, and underſtood. The ſenſations of Henry were combined of genius, conſtitutional diffidence, and the ſweet awe, without fear, that touched him in the preſence of Caroline. Theſe bound up his voice as by a ſpell; and Caroline invariably took refuge either in another ſubject, or flight, whenever ſhe ſaw him on the trembling edge of a declaration. And this was ſo well adjuſted on both ſides, that no one of the families, not even Charles, had ſuſpicion of what was paſſing in their boſoms. It was at length, however, betrayed by one of thoſe omnipotent trifles which often lead to, and determine, the great events of human life.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XX.

A BLOW.

CAROLINE had retreated from the rage of Sir Guiſe, on a day that he could not be wrought upon, and when Charles was from home. Her handkerchief was at her eyes, and as ſhe took it from them ſhe exclaimed, "This laſt ſeverity is indeed hard to bear! he has almoſt beat me to pieces!"

Henry, who had been taking his twilight walk, near the avenue, that led to the abbey, ruſhed through the boughs, vociferating, "Beat you, Caroline! who is the villain that dares lift his hand againſt the beloved of my heart and ſoul? his life ſhall anſwer it! ten thouſand lives cannot atone it. Inſult you! Beat you! O that the aſſaſſin were here! He ſhall die, Caroline, he ſhall die!—no! heaven be your avenger —he is, could be none other than Sir Guiſe Stuart, your ſavage father!" The ungovernable wildneſs of this ſpeech, the tender

phrenzy in which he preſſed her cheek upon his own, without ſcarce knowing that he touched her, increaſed for a moment the terrors of Caroline; but on reſuming herſelf, ſhe ſaid, with penetrating firmneſs, culouring as ſhe ſpoke, "There is a ſanctity, Sir, in the very infirmities of my father, while you are in his daughter's preſence! and though in a frail moment, you heard me bewail their effects, I muſt inſiſt upon your affixing to his name, no epithets unbecoming his child to hear."

Henry was ſilenced.

"In the preſent inſtance, it was particularly unſeaſonable, ſince it was chiefly in defence of your honour, Sir, that I have ſuffered."

Henry chilled with apprehenſion.

"You have been accuſed to Sir Guiſe, of carrying tales of our little diſturbances, from the abbey to the caſtle."

The cheeks of Henry ſeemed to hold all the blood that had filled the channels to his heart.

" For you, Henry, have I committed againſt my father, the firſt diſobedience of the life he gave."

Henry's blood ſallied back, and left his countenance colourleſs as death.

" I told him, that his ears had been abuſed, and that I would pledge my duty on the integrity of Henry Fitzorton."

Henry paſſionately caught her hand, and preſſed it to his pale and trembling lips. " You did me indeed but juſtice, Caroline: but was this juſtice repaid by blows?—O! the honour of my whole life were purchaſed too dear at ſuch a price."

" My rebellious anſwer ſtruck like unexpected thunder upon my father's ear, and juſtified what enſued."

" Juſtified!" rejoined Henry, looking over her lovely countenance, as if to examine the injuries it had received, all the indignant and tender paſſions ſtruggling in his own.

" But in the end, I triumphed; for a letter that inſtant arrived from my brother, replete with honourable teſtimony of

 Henry's

Henry's confidential virtues. John Fitzorton, had complained to Charles, that though he was regular in his enquiries after Charles, he never could get a ſyllable from his brother Henry, reſpecting any part of the Stuart family.

"I left my brother's written juſtification in my father's poſſeſſion; ſaying, as I withdrew, that I ſhould as ſoon connect diſhonour with my own ſoul, as with that of Henry Fitzorton!"

Henry heard this with a thrill of tranſport ſo univerſal, that unable to contain himſelf, he caught Caroline in his arms.

Sir Guiſe Stuart, accompanied by his Lady, came haſtily down the avenue, and ſurpriſed the lovers in this ſituation.

The Baronet ſhook with a ſenſation between the exceſſes of rage and aſtoniſhment; and running up to Caroline, with the dreadful violence of deſperate and uncontroulable authority, would have committed ſome outrage which his life, perhaps, muſt have anſwered, had not Lady Stuart, ſeeing his fury,

fury, thrown herſelf on her knees on the bare earth, between her huſband and her child, while Henry ſpread himſelf as a ſhield before Caroline, aſſeverating in a voice that echoed through the foreſt, " She was the moſt innocent and noble creature, now under the eye of an atteſting God!"

Caroline, with a modeſt intrepidity, ran from her protector, and raiſed her mother from the ground.—" I cannot bear to ſee you in this poſture, madam: it becomes the daughter, not the wife of Sir Guiſe Stuart"—then embracing her father's knees, ſhe entered into an explanation, as to the entire accident of the meeting.

He now heard the whole of Caroline's narration, and either was, or affected to be, ſatisfied: for with more ſerenity than could have been expected, he ſaid, " Mr. Fitz-orton may be ſure I think as well of him as the reſt of my family, or ſhould long ſince have forbidden him the abbey. Lady Stuart, indeed, and I, have been this half hour in ſearch of Caroline, to tell her, I was ſatisfied the reports made againſt you were

were falſe, though at the time I heard them, they had as bad an aſpect as our late diſcovery, and juſtified as ſtrong ſuſpicion; but explanations have done away both, and ſo if you are not engaged at the caſtle, come and paſs your evening with us at the abbey."

Henry accompanied them home to the infinite ſatisfaction of himſelf and Caroline, and not a little to the comfort of Sir Guiſe and his Lady; though it was a comfort ſpringing from very different cauſes; and Henry after having ſaid a number of things in the courſe of the evening, which proved the perfect innocence of himſelf and Caroline, but unluckily proved ſomething more, left his friends and took his way through the foreſt by the light of his beloved moon to the Caſtle of Fitzorton. When he came, however, to that part of the great avenue where the adventure that began the evening had happened, he could not but go a little way out of his path to reviſit the ſpot, and to do ſome act that might mark the æra of the firſt avowed

decla-

declaration of his paſſion for Caroline. Favoured, therefore, by the moon, he ſtopt to carve the names of Henry and Caroline, with the dates of the month and year upon the bark of that very tree, under which he had for the firſt time held her in his arms, while he breathed forth fervours of as chaſte a paſſion as ever animated the breaſt of man. "Bleſſed day," ſighed he, "and bleſſed be its returns to the end of time!"

But no ſooner were the parties at the abbey retired to their ſeparate chambers, than they gave way to their ſeparate reflections, each of which, though carried on in a different train, too plainly demonſtrated, that without diſputing any part of the facts which Caroline had explained, that very explanation went amongſt a thouſand other matters now firſt made to apply, to place beyond a doubt the long-cheriſhed, though long-concealed affection of Caroline and Henry. The amiable Lady Stuart ſecretly approved the flame, which ſhe nevertheleſs ſaw, would, if it went on, enwrap the hoſtile houſes in a blaze, that in the

the end would probably reduce both of them to aſhes. Sir Guiſe groaned in the bitterneſs of ill-ſmothered antipathy, even at the idea of uniting the families of Stuart and Fitzorton, the youngeſt branch of the latter, being ſuffered in obedience, ſtrange as may ſeem the expreſſion, to the wiſhes of the ſon, who, and who alone, had ſovereign dominion over this impracticable tyrant of a father; and Caroline herſelf, when ſhe conſulted her pillow on the events of the evening, and on thoſe occurrences which had preceded them, could not but foreſee innumerable evils riſing in aweful array before her view. Till this fatal night ſhe had never fully inveſtigated the extent of the miſchief which an affection for Henry would inevitably produce. The declaration of his paſſion had made the intereſt they took in each other more formidable: it had unbound as it were the charm, which, as a bandeau of love, had by a ſort of enchantment covered their eyes from looking too minutely into their hearts. But ſhe now, for the firſt time, began to

rebuke herſelf that the ſame motives which had ſo often impelled her to change Henry's converſation, break it ſhort, or leave him abruptly, had not ſerved as warnings of the ſtate of both their hearts: and of that ſorrow which was in reſerve for them, if an immediate ſtop were not put to their proceedings.

From accuſations of herſelf, ſhe proceeded to accuſe Henry, whom ſhe could not think without his ſhare of blame in theſe tranſactions: "the miſery we were preparing for ourſelves, and the wrongs we were heaping on our already but too much outraged houſes. After the laſt conteſt between them, which terminated in the hazard of his brother's life, it was indelicate, it was undutiful in him to approach the abbey:—and if his affection for Charles was conſidered as diſtinct from theſe unhappy feuds, that affection ſhould have been carried on at third places, and not clandeſtinely, under a roof where reſided, whether juſtly or unjuſtly, the known enemy of his father." Scarce had ſhe given

vent

vent to theſe ſentiments when her heart brought forth all its ſoft apologies to excuſe, and even to juſtify him. She called to mind the benevolent aſſiſtance ſhe had often received from him, when the rage of her father had over-borne her poor *mother* in its vortex, and left *her* undefended in the ſtorm; ſhe had heard too from Charles of the inceſſant, though concealed, endeavours of Henry to heal the breach of the contending houſes, till the laſt fatal ſtroke made it a *crime* to attempt it farther. In referring the caſe to her own heart ſhe there found his virtues, his tenderneſs, and manly graces, had enſhrined him as the firſt of human beings.—She found him worthy to be its entire poſſeſſor, and had not an argument remaining againſt him but that he was too amiable, and too unfortunate.

CHAPTER XXI.

A FAMILY BREAKFAST.

IN this diſpoſition ſhe roſe. Sir Guiſe firſt entered the breaſtfaſt room—Lady Stuart and Caroline ſoon followed; and the three ſat down without knowing any thing which had paſſed in each other's mind ſince they laſt parted; for as Sir Guiſe and his Lady ſlept in ſeparate apartments,—for a reaſon as diſgraceful to the one as it was honourable to the other, with which the reader ſhall, in its place, become acquainted,—they had no opportunity to communicate. The ſecret, therefore, which each ſuppoſed had been diſcovered, though each found out the ſame fact, only reaſoning on it differently, produced a ſimilar effect on their conduct: neither of them ſpoke to each other for ſome time, though each appeared to be labouring with ſomething extraordinary. The terrors gathered and diſperſed on the brow of Sir Guiſe; Lady

Stuart

Stuart ſometimes ſurveyed Caroline with tender diſtreſs, that mingled the emotions of pity and apprehenſion; and Caroline looked abaſhed, anxious, and confounded.

Sir Guiſe, after the firſt diſh of tea, roſe up, ſtrode acroſs the room thrice, ſlapped his hand on his forehead, and ſtamped with his foot exclaiming—"If it be ſo, woe to them both!" then turning to Caroline—"when the library bell rings, it is for you, Miſs Stuart."

The trembling Caroline bowed aſſent, and Sir Guiſe left the room, ſlapping the door after him with tremendous violence.

"My dear child," ſaid Lady Stuart, expanding her beautiful arms to receive Caroline, who, on her father's departure, ran into them for ſhelter—"you are unhappy—and I fear, too, Sir Guiſe has diſcovered the cauſe.—If it be that which I think I alſo have traced, what will become of us?"

"What, indeed, Madam? for it is—it can be only that—my own guilty mind

con-

convinces me it can be none other," anſwered Caroline.

"The guilt of tenderneſs for Henry Fitzorton," reſumed her mother, gently careſſing her,—" Ah! my deareſt-loved child, that the worſt paſſions in the breaſt of others ſhould make the beſt in ours criminal!"

Caroline, touched to the quick with this kindneſs, anſwered only with her tears.—" Forgive me what I cannot forgive *myſelf*."

"Forgive you!" ſaid Lady Stuart, "heaven is my witneſs, did my power keep pace with my inclination, your tender heart ſhould never heave a ſigh that did not proceed from the perfection of its joy. Are you not more than my child? Have you not been more than my parent? How many times has this feeble frame, ſinking under my huſband's diſpleaſure, been raiſed from the very duſt of the earth by Caroline? How many bitter ſarcaſms has her gentle nature borne for me? How many cruel

ſtrokes, intended for me, has that ſweet form received, and how often have you ſmiled in agony to think they did not reach your mother!"

"Spare, ſpare me, Madam," ſaid Caroline, weeping and clinging round her neck—"indeed, indeed, my life is of no value, but as it can be of ſome uſe, or comfort, to thoſe who beſtowed it."

"Yet do not ſuppoſe," continued Lady Stuart, "I did not feel the blows that you took from me. I felt them in my 'heart of hearts'—and at this moment could a mother's gratitude, love, or tender adoration, aught avail, the beſt of men ſhould be given, by this maternal hand, to the beſt of women—But, as it is, I tremble for you both."

Here the fatal bell began to ſound, and Caroline, who had hid her face in her mother's boſom that her bluſhes might not be ſeen during the laſt ſpeech, ſtarted up as if it were the knell of death, and begging her mother to be compoſed,

and

and depend upon Caroline's duty, obeyed the ſummons.

CHAPTER XXII.

TYRANNY.

THE ſibrary was at the farther-moſt part of the abbey, and the long dreary paſſages that led to it, with the echo that attended every ſtep, together with the rebound of the maſſy doors as ſhe opened and ſhut them, gave a ſolemnity to the ſcene ſhe was approaching: She came, at length, to the apartment, which ſhe no ſooner entered than ſhe threw herſelf at the feet of Sir Guiſe, who had collected all the *terrors of his diſpoſition* to receive her. Oft he circled the room which, even at mid-day, was always ſombrous, and even ſepulchral; oft he threw a glare of malignant diſdain towards her, ſtill ſuffering her to keep her lowly poſture. He dropt a curtain ſo as ſcarcely to admit the entrance of the light—

then faſtened the door.—His cruel nature never omitted giving to every puniſhment its pageantry and apparatus to make it the more terrifying.—At length, with a voice that was the more dreadful for being controuled, he ſaid—"Audacious! you are beloved by the ſon of my bittereſt enemy!"

Caroline bowed her head.

"This is not the worſt," continued he, "you return his paſſion!"

Caroline was ſilent.

"Mark me," ſaid Sir Guiſe, "forbid him the abbey, and let the act ſeem to be your own."

Caroline bowed aſſent.

"Frame ſome fit reaſon to your brother for your conduct, and let neither his anger, nor that of your inſolent lover, wring from you the ſecret that this was by my command."

Caroline bowed again.

"For the preſent," ſaid he, "you may withdraw." Seeing her riſe to obey, he continued,—"No,—remain *you* here,

while

while I give orders to your mother, who is to underſtand, remember, it is a ſettled point for which you alone are accountable, that *Henry Fitzorton never enters more the Abbey of Stuart.*"

After Sir Guiſe had left the room, ſhe remained for ſome moments without motion—then fetching a deep ſigh, ſhe exclaimed—the tears almoſt choaking her utterance—" This is the hardeſt duty ever yet impoſed on me: Enable me, good heaven, to bear it!"

There was, however, as we have already obſerved, a fortitude in the mind of this amiable girl which equalled the tenderneſs of her heart, and on this great occaſion ſhe reſolved to ſummon it to her aid. She, began, ſeriouſly, to conſider how this might beſt, and moſt effectually be done; not a little felicitating herſelf that as Henry was now gone home, ſhe ſhould have time to deviſe means proportioned to the end. While ſhe was ruminating on theſe matters, the library folding-doors were again thrown

open,—Sir Guife re-entered—ftood fixed an inftant—turned back—and beckoned her to follow him. They paffed along the winding labyrinths, and cloifter-like glooms, without fpeaking a word; and as they came within view of the room to which he was guiding her, he faid, in a firm but fearful kind of whifper—That is the apartment—and this the op-portunity—*obedience or death!*" then abruptly leaving her, he ftrode back towards the library. The handle of the door fhook as fhe opened it, without knowing what fhe had to apprehend: but what was her aftonifhment when fhe faw Henry Fitzorton, fitting with Lady Stuart, half drowned in her tears! Caroline had not time or power to articulate her furprize, before her mother rofe, as fhe had been previoufly commanded, and looking unutterable tendernefs, firft at Caroline, then at Henry, left the room.—On Caroline's following her fhe gently repulfed her—fhook her head, and

fhewed

ſhewed every ſign of dumb diſtreſs as ſhe withdrew.

She now found herſelf alone with the *very* Henry ſhe thought never to ſee more. It was a prophetick pauſe on both ſides. Henry firſt broke ſilence by informing her, that he could not reſt in peace till he found the reconciliations of the paſt night were confirmed: but that from the preſent air of Sir Guiſe, and the unexplained anxiety of Lady Stuart, he had fears that ſome new commotion had happened, and begged earneſtly to know if he could any way be made inſtrumental to reſtore the quiet of the family.

"You can, and you only," anſwered Caroline. "You, yeſterday, declared your love, and to-day I renounce, what, alas! I could not accept without complicated injury and injuſtice. We have erred; let us reform that errour: but, as the taſk may be more difficult while we are in the preſence of each other, it is a duty—perhaps a hard one—but

ſtill a duty that we owe each other—and, certainly that we owe our unhappily divided houſes, to meet no more."—It was ſome minutes before ſhe could utter the laſt ſentence!

Perceiving, as ſhe ſaid this, that Henry was about to combat all her arguments, and knowing how powerful an advocate in his favour ſhe nouriſhed in her own boſom, ſhe anticipated, and annihilated, whatever he could have advanced by this deciſive ſentence—" I have ſpoken on *conviction*, Henry, and my actions muſt accord with my words."

Having delivered herſelf thus, with an unuſual degree of ſolemnity, ſhe advanced towards Henry, gave him her hand in a manner that at once expreſſed tenderneſs and reſolution, and with a voice in uniſon with theſe, exclaimed, " My dear, my excellent Henry, may the bleſſings of heaven follow you as unceaſingly as my regard!"

The agitated Henry wanted courage to releaſe her hand, or to retain it.—His

own

own trembled in it—the unutterable anguish of such a parting was painted in his looks as he surveyed those of Caroline, who perceiving his situation, and, perhaps, feeling her own would, in the next instant, be similar, by one powerful effort—as the tears were stealing unbidden down her lovely face—as her colour began to vary, and her limbs to fail—firmly, but not rudely, broke from his hands, and rushed out of the apartment.

In her way back to the library she met Sir Guise, to whom with resumed force, for presence of mind was amongst her extraordinary powers, she said, "You ARE obeyed my father—suffer me now to enjoy the victory over myself."

Meeting no interruption from Sir Guise she sought her chamber, while her father went into the apartment she had just left, in order to enjoy a victory of another kind. On his entrance he found Henry overwhelmed in his grief and despair, and apologized to him, on pre-

tence of bufinefs, for having left the room fo abruptly: while Henry,—fo infinitely do circumftances change the objects of fear to hope, and hope to fear,—foftened his defperation by a thought that an enemy might be converted into a friend; his agitated heart believed it poffible that the father, in his pitying goodnefs, would intercede with the daughter, to relax fo much of her cruel refolution, as to fuffer his vifits at the abbey as a friend.

Had Sir Guife fhaped an event to his wifh it could not have been more aufpicious than this to his purpofe; for every pang he inflicted on any individual of the Fitzorton family, fo as he efcaped the danger of difcovering that he was the inflictor, gratified that revenge he felt for the whole. He now, therefore, began to fing forth the praifes of his own friendly wifhes on the occafion; declaring how infinitely he was aftonifhed firft at the affection itfelf, and fecondly, at the girl's fo abfolute rejection of him.

"How-

"However I will do my beſt, and hope I may ſucceed," added he, "and if you fail the fault will not lie with me." Sir Guiſe ſhook him by the hand, adviſed him to ſuſpend his viſits for a few days, that he might have the better opportunity to befriend his cauſe, and ſmiled as he bade him farewel. Henry, who believed that every ſmile and promiſe was ſincere, left the abbey much conſoled.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A RECONCILIATION.

WHILE theſe matters were carrying on in the family of Sir Guiſe Stuart, tranſactions no leſs intereſting, but of a very different nature, had happened at the caſtle. For a conſiderable time after the feſtivities, on the birth day of Olivia, the houſes of Fitzorton and Clare, were in that ſtate of happineſs, which, in good minds, generally are in the train

of reconciliations. John had more than one caufe of hoarded regret, but he had learned early to facrifice; and although Henry yet carried, like the wounded deer, an arrow in his bofom, which often feparated him from the focial circle, he ftill nourifhed the hope of a cure, and waited in fecret an opportunity to explain. Meanwhile his flights, and his reveries, were varioufly accounted for, defended by Olivia, bantered by John, and pardoned by all.

But themes which too often employed the contemplations of John, were of a nature fo heavy to his thought, and fo unyielding even to his difcipline, that it became neceffary to call in the active profeffion of arms, in aid of a ftrong, yet incompetent philofophy. In the collifion of opinion, the mind is feized upon, and warmed by fecondary objects, and its primary emotions are awhile fufpended; but, faithful to thefe, fhe flies back to her mafter-paffion: even when replete with woe, and although fhe again finds it neceffary,

ceſſary, perhaps, to force herſelf into oppoſite trains of reflection, or of employment, many are the returns, and many the deſertions, ere that grand and bleſſed deſideratum in morality—an eaſy government of the heart and its paſſions—can be attained.

Meanwhile, James continued the plain and even track of his profeſſion, and was, on his own account, the leaſt annoyed by care.—Even in his temper, regular in the exertion of his talents, and undeviating in his purſuits, he followed the path he had choſen, without any other ambition than that of being diſtinguiſhed as a man of ound principles, ſound underſtanding, and a ſound lawyer—the honourable points towards which he found himſelf quietly advance. His vacations, whether of days or weeks, were paſt at the caſtle, where he entered literally into all that concerned his family or his friends; now ſettled a difference, and now ſtrengthened an agreement; and although both John and Henry ſometimes retained their own ſentiments, after they

they had confulted him, each had fo good an opinion of his fairnefs in judgment, and candour in decifion, that when Sir Armine delivered them over to themfelves, declaring they muft battle it out, they fometimes fuffered the difputed point to ftand over until James fhould come down.

But, alas! there were feveral important points which neither Henry nor John could fubmit to the arbitration, even of a tender brother, and which, indeed, they fcarcely dared whifper to their own minds. The laft affray betwixt St. Armine and Sir Guife, and the filial piety of John on that occafion, had fo widened the family breach, that there feemed no way, confiftent with Henry's duty, either to become an advocate for Sir Guife, or to carry on a correfpondence with his fon. Neverthelefs a more active power even than his general benevolence, or than his particular friendfhip—his love of Caroline, emboldened him to attempt both thefe arduous points. His efforts, however, to conciliate, produced from his father the firft frown he

had

had ever received from him; and under the miſery of this, he languiſhed until he had made atonement by a ſolemn promiſe, never to mention Sir Guiſe Stuart in the preſence of Sir Armine, until permitted by the latter.

Olivia happened to be preſent at the moment of his father's diſpleaſure; and Henry had obſerved her ſympathiſing tears deſcend, as ſhe ſaw the open brow of Sir Armine contract. Thoſe tears fell like the dews of heaven upon his anger, and melted away the frown. "Behold," ſaid ſhe to Henry, "your good father has the ſweeteſt ſmile on his countenance you ever ſaw; it would grace the brow of the angel of forgiveneſs." Then approaching Sir Armine, with Henry in her hand, ſhe exclaimed—"His firſt offence will receive your full pardon, Sir, when you conſider, there has been diſcovered in it, more virtue than we can find in moſt other people's beſt actions." This, though it produced an embrace from Sir Armine, was a freſh blow to Henry, who knew there was leſs virtue

virtue in his interceſſions for the Stuart family, than in moſt of the other actions of his life, unleſs it be among thoſe cardinal virtues of human nature, which, according to the celebrated Maximiſt, " begin and end in ſelf."

Olivia ſtill ſaw that Henry was at war with himſelf, ſhe therefore conſidered how ſhe could more perfectly reſtore his peace. With this view, getting John into the plot, ſhe took Sir Armine aſide one evening, ſaying in a ſeducing kind of half-whiſper, " ſhe had a boon to prefer ;" the Baronet replied, " ſhe ſhould not aſk in vain." They withdrew, and in leſs than an hour returned hand in hand in high good humour. Mr. Clare obſerved, " that if ſhe went on in that manner, making palpable love to Sir Armine, he ſhould be jealous." " And if you, Sir, are not jealous," ſaid James, " methinks my brother Henry will have good reaſon to be ſo, or elſe he is all at once grown a very even-tempered youth." Many little pacifick ſallies ſucceeded: ſupper was ſerved; after which

Sir

Sir Armine desired Olivia's toast; she gave "Charles Stuart;" Henry looked alternately at his father and Olivia. Sir Armine repeated the toast with an amicable emphasis; Henry then filled his glass, bowing first to his Father, then to Olivia, who sat in her accustomed seat at his side: the bumpers passed round; after which Sir Armine observed, "it had been the opinion of advocates Olivia and James, and confirmed by Philosopher John, that the white lambs should be separated from the black sheep, and that as neither Lady, Charles, nor Caroline Stuart, had at any time, aided or abetted the domestick hostilities, they were no ways contaminated by their necessary connections with their offending father"—"And as," interrupted John, "it has been determined in our family cabinet to re-instate Charles at the Castle"—"And to allow you, my dear Henry," exclaimed Olivia, "to return his visits at the abbey"—"Deliver this pacquet to your friend," said John, "and be sure you tell him I acknowledge him as a brother

ther officer."—" And take notice, my Harry," rejoined his father, " I am ready to ſign the treaty immediately." " Very fine!" quoth Mr. Clare, " but what have all of you to ſay to my girl, who, I plainly ſee, has coaxed Fitzorton out of all this? don't tell me! it was neither your law James, nor John's philoſophy, no, nor yet Henry's poetry:—It was my Olivia's magick—neither youth nor age can withſtand her ſpells. O, my conſcience! the next rencontre we hear of, I ſuppoſe, will be between Sir Armine and his three ſons, contending for my fair daughter!"— " Bleſs me!" ſaid Olivia, " you make a great piece of work about a trifle, I wiſh every hour of my life could add either to the father or the ſons ſome proof of the gratitude and affection I owe them!"

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SECOND FAMILY SECRET.

HENRY was fully confcious of the extent of his obligation to Olivia; yet nothing is more certain, than that Henry had rather have been indebted for fuch obligation, and fuch fervice, infinite as they were, to any one than to Olivia.

On the morning that followed thefe tranfactions, a letter, under the great feal of the family, was difpatched to Charles Stuart: then, as Henry, who was mafter of all his movements, perfectly knew, on a vifit in the neighbourhood. That amiable youth foon obeyed the fummons; for friendfhip, high and aweful as are her claims, was but fecondary in his bofom. The firft grand object of attraction at the caftle, like that of Henry at the abbey, alas! was Love; a fecret known as yet only to each other.

Charles

Charles Stuart, for the firſt time ſince the fatal affair in the pleaſure-grounds, was uſhered into the caſtle by John, who met him with Henry at the gate; Sir Armine then received him with a ſmile ſo ineffable, that a by-ſtander might have ſuppoſed he had been embracing the ſon of a dear friend inſtead of an inveterate enemy; then turning to Olivia, " Young ſoldier," continued he, " I have made a miſtake. It is here that you ought to pay your firſt acknowledgments: it is to that fair mediatrix we are indebted for your reſtoration to your friend Henry, and to our fire-ſide."

Charles conjured up in a moment an hoſt of hopes which he had never before dared to indulge; for he was not now to learn Olivia's prepoſſeſſions, and never having received any marks of kindneſs from her which were not evidently beſtowed upon Henry's account, he trembled before her without uttering a word, and did not even make his bow without embarraſſment. Olivia perceiving this, and who

who always ſaw actions in the beſt light, imputed it to the aukwardneſs of his ſituation, and to the abruptneſs with which John had brought him in: following therefore that impulſe, which invariably led her to augment pleaſure and diminiſh pain, ſhe cried out, "Indeed, Mr. Stuart, we owe the happineſs of your return to your own merits and to Sir Armine's thorough ſenſe of them; and we are all equally happy to ſee you at the caſtle, where thoſe merits muſt always ſecure an independent welcome."

Charles having now had a moment to recover himſelf, replied with ſome coherence: obſerving, "that his preſent reinſtatement had been owing infinitely leſs to his own merits, than to thoſe of every individual then preſent."

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XXV.

CROSS PURPOSES.

NOTWITHSTANDING this renewal of his privileges, Charles Stuart's reſtoration at the caſtle was in ſome reſpects more perplexing than Henry's diſmiſſion from the abbey. For if it gave him all the opportunities of ſeeing and converſing with Olivia, he thereby witneſſed but the more evidences of her entire attachment to his rival. Whenever Charles and Olivia were *tête-a-tête*, ſhe ſeldom entertained him with any thing but the praiſes of his divine friend. If any work of genius happened to be the topick, ſhe would criticiſe her own remarks, and exclaim, "How much more gracefully the opinion I have offered you, would have been expreſſed by your friend." If any benevolent action had been reported to her, though ſhe granted it great merit, ſhe could not but obſerve, "what additional charms it would

have received from the manner with which his friend Henry would have done it." If the author of ſuch action was not yet diſcovered, ſhe would inſiſt, " it could be no other than his friend Henry; ſhe plainly ſaw his generous and delicate ſoul in every part of it: indeed, not more in the goodneſs itſelf, than in the caution with which it was concealed." Or if elegance of manners, grace of motion, happineſs of expreſſion, harmony of voice, or eaſe of addreſs were talked of, ſhe would be ſure before the cloſe of the converſation, to give powerful reaſons why his friend Henry ſurpaſſed every other man in all theſe particulars, and generally concluded by appealing to Charles himſelf for a confirmation of her opinion.

Charles Stuart was perfectly ſenſible of Henry's high pretenſions, and very readily admitted Olivia's eulogy to its utmoſt bound; yet he could not help now and then thinking it hard, that whenever he attempted to do juſtice to the claims of

his

his friend, he rendered Olivia wholly forgetful of his own.

Yet Henry, as well from his fincere friendſhip to Charles, as from his fincere love to Caroline, tried hard to make his friend an object of Olivia's affection. But, as a diſcovery of this would have counteracted his purpoſe, theſe endeavours were indirect: and theſe very obliquities added to the perplexity. Olivia, for inſtance, like Caroline, was enamoured of muſic; Charles had ſkill both to ſing and play; and Henry would ſeldom let an evening paſs without calling upon Charles for a ſong. Olivia moved a minuet to great perfection; and when the families were aſſembled, her fond father would often whiſper Henry, " to uſe his intereſt with Olivia to give him his favourite." Henry, to avoid this, would every now and then frame excuſes that might give to Charles the chance of Olivia for a partner. At one time he pretended to be ſuddenly ſeized by the cramp; at another, he had ſome

ſome how twiſted his ancle, and would limp towards Olivia to make his apologies, propoſing at the ſame time, the ſervices of his friend Charles—declaring, "he himſelf, as ſhe muſt perceive, could not walk the figure if he might have the univerſe." At another time, ſo violent a head-ach, without any warning, would come upon him, juſt as Mr. Clare was making the requeſt, that he would approach Olivia, holding his hand to his forehead, intreating, "that his misfortune might not prevent her father or the company from the pleaſure of ſeeing her dance, eſpecially as his friend Charles could ſo well ſupply his place:" then, without giving her time to object, he would haſten to Charles as his ſubſtitute. The very idea, however, of pain or of indiſpoſition of Henry, was ſufficient to unfit her for the reliſh of any amuſement; ſhe would generally, therefore, be taken ill on ſuch occaſions as ſuddenly as himſelf, though with much more of reality. Now and then her father, to whom her dancing

was a perfect banquet, would interpofe, in obedience to whom fhe would ftand up and fuffer Charles to take her hand; but even then her attentions would go to Henry: fhe would beg her father "not to hum the air quite fo jovially as ufual," and bribing him to fofter tones with a kifs, "becaufe you know, dear Sir," would fhe fay, "it will diftract poor Henry's head;" then tripping to Lady Fitzorton, feated at the harpfichord, fhe would befeech her "to play the minuet as lightly as poffible.—Piano! pianiffimo! my dear madam!" cried Olivia, I can plainly fee Henry is in torture with that ugly head-ach." After all this, fhe acquitted herfelf fo ill, that even her father, in whofe opinion fhe could do few things amifs, would fometimes fay, "O, my confcience! child, one would think that you had never been at a boarding fchool;" and fometimes Lady Fitzorton perceiving her fituation, would rife to her relief, and by a handfome apology to Charles, "beg fhe might be permitted to fit down, and take fome

ſome other opportunity—for you cannot be ignorant, my dear Sir," addreſſing herſelf to Charles, "if your friend Henry's finger does but ach, it is a death wound to this apprehenſive ſimpleton." When, however, ſhe did labour through her taſk, ſhe would run to Henry, whom ſhe fancied by his gravity, was offended at her inattention to his friend, or perhaps, at her own defects, and ſay, "Nay, but you muſt not be angry with me for my aukwardneſs, it was your own fault, and it will be quite ill-natured of you if you don't make my excuſes to Mr. Stuart, by telling him I ſhould have done more juſtice to him, if his friend Henry had been in better health and ſpirits."

Thus was poor Charles ſtill making good the ground of his rival in all things. The mortification was ſhared equally by Henry, who, though juſtified by the unconquerable love he bore to Charles's ſiſter, in every fair endeavour to wean Olivia from her attachment to him, and blocked out as he was on all ſides from

any more direct methods, could not but reproach himself for practising upon her, even on the best motives, these little deceptions; yet they were in his case sanctioned in a peculiar manner; for from the first discovery of the bent of Olivia's affections, and of the family designs built thereupon, he could have taken no measures less circuitous, without the hazard of greater mischief. But for a disposition like Henry's, not to do or say something kind, after he had done or said any thing harsh or cruel, appeared the hardest task in the world: and if there had been a moment of his life in which he could have forgot his whole heart was Caroline's, he would in that moment have offered it to Olivia.

A situation sufficiently arduous; yet was that of his friend Charles no less difficult. His honour, which was such as became a soldier and a friend, bound up the secret of Henry's attachment to his sister with more than ribs of iron. Henry, indeed, more than once wished

to

to make him the medium of his explanation on this head; but the little chance of its ſucceſs, and the great hazard of throwing the families into confuſion, with the fear that Charles himſelf might be looked upon as a go-between, and again expelled the caſtle, with the hope he ſometimes indulged—what is the wild hope, that love cannot indulge?—that time and opportunity might, in the boſom of Olivia, operate in his favour, determined both the young friends to enter on an oath of ſilence.

Not a ſyllable, therefore, that implied pre-attachment, dared poor Charles adventure in his moſt unreſerved converſations at the caſtle, about Henry's attachment to his ſiſter; and whenever Olivia expreſſed an impatience to revive her perſonal acquaintance with lady and Miſs Stuart, all he could do was deeply to regret the unhappy diſpute, or elſe return the compliment by a bow. Neither could this hapleſs lover, for equally cogent reaſons, utter a word to Caroline

of Henry's ſituation with Olivia, or even of his own paſſion for that lady, ſince the firſt would have betrayed his friend's ſecret, and the ſecond would have diſcovered his own: ſuch are the labyrinths of love!

CHAPTER XXVI.

AN UNEASY HOME.

CHARLES and Henry, therefore, could confide ſafely only in each other, and under many trying circumſtances they were found faithful. With the moſt generous ardour and ſincerity they congratulated, and condoled as occurrences of hope or of depair aroſe between them. If Henry ſought occaſion to throw the merits of Charles under the eye of Olivia, Charles with no leſs zeal favoured his ſuit with Caroline. They mingled ſighs and tears of friendſhip and of love; they felt forcibly that the ſame doating fondneſs of their fathers, procured them, in deſpite of

of alienation, the welcome of one at the caſtle, and of the other to the abbey. But Henry had, hitherto, withheld, even from his boſom friend, the dire alteration of his affairs at the abbey; yet Charles began to wonder that Henry had become a leſs frequent viſitor there—he was ſurprized to find him melting into tears, and yet more to hear him frequently aſk thoſe queſtions about Caroline's health, to which he himſelf could, as he ſuppoſed, receive a perſonal anſwer.

He obſerved him not ſeldom burſting into agony as he pronounced Caroline's very name, and was aſtoniſhed at the myſterious manner of Henry, when, accompanying him to the end of the avenue that led to the abbey, he would linger there, ſurvey the manſion, embrace his friend, contend with heavy emotions, then ruſh towards the caſtle in the utmoſt diſorder. At home alſo, Charles perceived that Sir Guiſe had become more fawningly civil than uſual

to his wife and daughter,—a certain prognoſtic of ſome undermining artifice; and that Lady Stuart and Caroline maintained a dumb kind of grief. Indeed, the mazes were ſo involved that Henry could not come to an explanation with any one, and leaſt of all with Olivia. Often was he on the verge of pouring into her gentle heart his fulleſt confidence, and throwing himſelf on her generoſity—and once, when the confeſſion of his heart had aſcended his lip, and trembled there, he was reſtrained by an unexpected ſeries of circumſtances, that bound him to ſilence more firmly than before—circumſtances which, alas! tied his tongue more potently, than if it had been bound by a thouſand chains.

CHAPTER XXVII.

STRUGGLES.

WHATEVER favourites the reader may have at the caſtle of Fitzorton,

and we truſt it contains not a few, he will accompany us back with a ſympathizing heart to Guiſe Abbey.

No ſooner had Caroline, that fair pattern of filial piety, gained her chamber, after her ſolemn taking leave of Henry, than a certain triumph which attends a truly great mind, after it has ſacrificed the deareſt paſſions to the aweful duties of nature, ſeemed to play about her like a ſurrounding glory. The amiable victim had obeyed an abſolute father; but a lover worthy even of her affection was the price of that obedience. Her own gentle hand had heaped upon him a freſh burden of ſorrow, and though ſhe repented not of the duty ſhe had performed, nor the pangs with which it was attended to herſelf, ſhe felt the deepeſt concern that the peace of Henry ſhould be involved,—as it muſt appear to him, by her own cruelty or caprice; for ſhe could plainly perceive, he was neither convinced of the neceſſity nor virtue of her conduct. Amidſt reflections like

these, she walked to that window of her apartment which gave her a prospect of the castle, and which being at the top of the abbey, overlooked all malicious obstructions. She instantly beheld her Henry, taking his melancholy way towards his home, through that very avenue so dear, yet fatal to remembrance. That moment a thousand tender thoughts crouded upon her, and in a tone of the most piercing misery, she exclaimed —" What! Oh! what, dear youth, would I not give, did rigid duty permit me to open this casement, and invite thee to retrace thy footsteps! and intreat of thee to return to love and Caroline? Methinks, I would purchase such a transport, though but of one day's continuance, with years of captivity; nay, with the years of my life! Too well those disordered steps, and irresolute motions, denote the disorders of thy soul!" While she was thus speaking Henry had turned again, and stood fixed in the centre of the avenue, directing his eyes to

her apartment. She had evidently caught his view, and touched by the occaſion had half opened the window to repeat, and receive the laſt look and adieu, when that ſtern duty ſeemed to menace reproof more terrible than her father's, and in thunder to ſay, raſh girl, forbear! and as if ſhe had, indeed, heard theſe words pronounced by Sir Guiſe, ſhe ſuddenly turned from the window, and denied her heart the only comfort it was capable of taſting. She then folded her hands together, and kneeling down, ſhe exclaimed—"O! eternally beloved, though for ever relinquiſhed, youth! if thou art ſtill gazing on the walls that encloſe thy Caroline, may ſome good angel, who has diſtreſſed virtue in guard, whiſper to thee the prayer which now breathes from my ſoul; and may a knowledge of thy Caroline's employment at this moment ſtrengthen thee to bear our parting, and teach thee to venerate the cauſe, though thou art grieved by the effect! Bleſſed be the ſpot wheron thou ſtandeſt, that

consecrated earth more precious to Caroline than all that remains of the universe; or if in displeasure or despair thou hast torn thyself away, and art hastening from the mansion that hath so ill intreated thee to that which shall open all its gates to give thee welcome, may the peace which thou hast been robbed of here be restored to thee in the bosom of a family, to whom every virtue of thy soul, and every grace of thy nature is dear!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ANOTHER BLOW.

IN this situation lady Stuart, strongly agitated, entered the room, and seeing the state of her daughter, exclaimed—"O my child, my child, that the life or death of a mother could make thee happy! I come to thee for comfort, and thou hast none to bestow, but art in want of it thyself; nor has thy powerless

leſs parent any to give—ſhe flies to thy protection, to thy pity, in the bitter moment of a huſband's curſe—yes, my child, thy father ſends me to thee with his curſe upon us both!"

Caroline, at the terrifying ſound, ſprung up, and fervently ejaculating, " my father's curſe!" then lifting up her eyes, ſtreaming with tears, to heaven—" But the Father of all ſhall bleſs us both!" ſaid ſhe, " he is a forgiving parent, and we will intercede with him for the pardon of him whoſe wrath is thus kindled againſt us! alas, it is the infirmity of his nature, and he ſuffers more ſorely than ourſelves!" Lady Stuart ſhook her head, and tenderly kiſſing her child— " The prayers of innocence, like thine, may call down pardon, even for the guilty," ſaid ſhe; " but for the unremitting, unprovoked, and unreſiſted cruelty of Sir Guiſe"—Here ſhe ſtopt, and burſting into a flood of tears—" ſurely, ſurely," added ſhe, " there is, there can be no hope—but I dare not tell thee, my child,

child, how hardly he has treated me!"

"Neither dare I enquire," replied Caroline, returning her mother's kiſs.—"The God of pity and pardon intercede for us all!"

The fact was, that Sir Guiſe had no ſooner quitted the room, after his diſcourſe with Henry, than lady Stuart, from her ſuite of apartments which communicated with that where Henry was ſitting, came to him like the angel of compaſſion; and Henry, upon ſeeing her enter, ſprung up and fell at her feet in the moſt paſſionate diſtreſs—"O lady Stuart!" ſaid he, "Caroline has baniſhed me from her preſence for ever! ſhe is more inexorable even than her father, who would have mediated between us, had not her fixed obduracy prevented; and I am now left, by both, in utter deſpair."

Lady Stuart bewailed his misfortune, but exhorted him to patience, and the hope of happier days; aſſuring him that the wiſhes of her heart went with his own

ſo

ſo entirely, that ſhe not only deſired to ſee her daughter and him united, but that from that union might proceed a bond of reconcilement between the too long-divided houſes of Stuart and Fitzorton.

As ſhe pronounced theſe words, her huſband, haunted by that perturbed ſpirit of guilt, returned, and from his uſual hiding place, overheard every ſyllable: he ſtrode with gigantic ſteps from the door at which he entered to that which was oppoſite, and then diſappeared, caſting a ſcornful look at his lady, but without uttering a word. His poor wife, however, could but too well interpret his ſilence. And Henry himſelf underſtood it ſufficiently to exclaim, "O lady Stuart! ſhould I be the cauſe of involving you too, by drawing freſh ſeverities from Sir Guiſe, I ſhall be a wretch indeed!"

"Whatever may be the event, do not ſtay to ſhare it, I conjure you," ſaid lady Stuart, "and if Caroline be dear go this moment from the abbey. She, hapleſs

girl,

girl, has too many of my griefs, and of yours, to bear already; and if I can prevent this rising storm from reaching her, I will abide its utmost fury with joy. If then she be precious to you, Mr. Fitzorton, depart before my husband returns, and depend upon all that a powerless, but doating mother can do, for a child who is a benefactress."

Henry folded his hands upon his breast, and, bowing his head almost to the earth, in token of unutterable gratitude and grief unspeakable, again left the house, which contained, at once, his hope and his despair. After he was gone, lady Stuart remained silent and motionless, as a statue, her gentle heart foreboding a thousand terrors. Never stood she in so much need of her filial comforter, whose assistance, however, she had predetermined not to invoke. And, indeed, all unable as she was to bear the hurricanes which were incessantly beating against her by the gusts of this tempestuous man, she never called her Caroline

roline to her aid, ſave when ſhe happened to be by as the clouds were gathering, or likely to gather. On the contrary, ſhe would felicitate herſelf whenever they burſt on her alone, and rejoice in the thought that her poor child had been ſpared: and after the ſtorms were paſt, her greateſt care was to prevent Caroline from knowing there had been any matter of diſturbance.

CHAPTER XXIX.

AN OLD SERVANT.

THE feeble frame, ſhattered nerves, and impaired health of lady Stuart, though blooming as her daughter, when ſhe firſt married, would generally prove too weak for her utmoſt efforts, and, indeed, whenever ſhe was longer abſent than uſual, Caroline would hunt her griefs through every apartment where ſhe attempted to hide them, and inſiſt that ſhe had a claim from nature, and nature's God, to

num-

number "ſigh for ſigh, and groan for groan."

The abject-hearted Sir Guiſe—who had been on the watch, like ſome fearful ſcout, and trembling under his commiſſion—not daring to put himſelf a ſecond time in Henry's preſence, ſent into the room to ſee if his lady was alone, "but," ſaid he to the ſervant, "if any one ſhould be with her, pretend ſome errand and return."

The perſon diſpatched by Sir Guiſe, was named Denniſon, who came into the family with his lady. At her requeſt, alſo, when it was the Baronet's intereſt to comply with all her wiſhes, it was ſettled that this worthy adherent, who had paſt his blameleſs life in the ſervice of her ladyſhip's family, ſhould be tranſferred to the abbey on the union of his younger miſtreſs, and hold the ſame place he had filled at Edgecumbe-Hall, which was that of houſe ſteward. The quarrels, which had ſince paſſed between him and Sir Guiſe, on his lady's account,

count, had been innumerable, and the experiments which the Baronet had made to force Dennifon to a refignation of his place, were no lefs; "but where my lady lodges, there will I lodge," was his maxim, and thefe attempts to get rid of him had been for fome time fufpended, or rather Sir Guife's folly abroad had defeated his tyranny at home. The good fteward had difcovered certain infidelities, of which he forbore to tell any of the family, for two reafons: firft, becaufe he held the fecret over the head of his mafter, as a fword in the fcabbard, to deter him from farther ill-ufage of his lady or daughter; and fecondly,—becaufe he was fearful any revival of the fubject might increafe her uneafinefs, if not on the article of violated love, of indignant virtue; for the wretch with whom Sir Guife affociated was low born, and of a mind yet more abject. Her name was Tempeft, a woman who had been, indeed, one of the menial fervants of the family. As Sir Guife was giving orders to another

ther domeſtick, Denniſon, who overheard them, and who, from his maſter's reſtleſs agility, knew there was ſome freſh miſchief on foot, undertook to be himſelf the meſſenger.

This honeſt adherent, who was ſtill an uncorrupted child of nature, no ſooner ſaw the condition in which he found his miſtreſs, than, diſregarding the injunctions of Sir Guiſe, he ſaid, "My maſter, madam, deſires to know if you are alone; but pray, my lady, let me ſay you are unwell; let me tell him it will be out of your power to receive him for ſome hours; and in the mean while, I will ſee what can be done to bring him about; and ſhall I beg Miſs Caroline to come, and keep your ladyſhip company, until I have got him round a little? ſhe is a dear ſoul, and will do all ſhe can to make the beſt of bad matters, but it is a ſad pity young maſter ſhould be from the abbey. He could tame the old lion, at once, and make him as meek as a lamb; dear Mr. Henry Fitzorton is gone

gone away. I met him awhile ago, poor gentleman, juſt as he was opening the great door, and his honour ſhook me by the hand, God bleſs him; and with his heart ready to burſt, ſaid, ‘ Farewel Mr. Denniſon, farewel; pray take care of your lady, and of your young miſtreſs, for when I have paſſed this threſhold, Mr. Denniſon, I muſt never come within theſe doors again.’

“ Then the devil may ſhut it, honoured Sir, ſaid I, for Denniſon, for I would be turned out of doors myſelf, ſooner than be the man to cloſe it upon ſuch a friend to the family, as you are, and whom both my lady and young miſtreſs love ſo dearly. ‘ Do they love me ſo much?’ cried the Squire, ‘ does Miſs Caroline, think you? and yet, Denniſon, ſhe it is who’—Here, madam, the poor gentleman's words were choaked in his ſighs, and then bidding me again, farewel, and again ſhaking me by the hand, he ran out of the houſe.”

CHAP-

CHAPTER XXX.

A VICTIM.

THE suspicious disposition of Sir Guise not suffering him to wait while honest Dennison ended his harangue, and having learned from another of the servants that Henry had left the house, and must by this time have got to the castle, he went into the room; and Dennison, deceived by an unexpected mildness in his master's voice, withdrew.

The very instant, however, he had so done, he approached lady Stuart, dying with her fears, and in a governed tone, which, as it were, ground his words into a dreadful mutter between his teeth, cried, "Traitorous woman! I see you are stirring up my daughter to rebel against her father's authority, and are dividing my own house against me, as much as that of the detested Fitzorton's. Do not speak; I heard you promise your assistance to the young serpent, out of

that

that neſt of ſnakes, crawling to you on his knees. But theſe are my open enemies; they are, by compariſon, generous;—the moſt baneful vipers ſprung from my loins, or are nouriſhed in my boſom. My curſes on you—yes, the curſe of an huſband repay your treachery! and for that young adder, whom you preſented to me in the ſhape of a daughter, go bear to her an equal execration, and tell her an injured father ſent it as his laſt legacy; go—and if a ſentence, from either of you, reaches even the ſervants' hall, tremble for the conſequence!"

This terrible menace he accompanied with action ſo fierce, his eyeballs rolling, and his lips covered with foam, from the torture of paſſion controuled, that lady Stuart had hardly ſtrength enough left her to totter out of the room, and ſtagger up to Caroline's apartment, in the manner before deſcribed.

Fain would ſhe have withdrawn to her own chamber, but was, on this ſore occaſion led, by an involuntary impulſe,

to

to her only comforter, her Caroline, who loſt her own ſorrows in thoſe of her mother; but, preſſed by a multitude of emotions, ſhe ſunk at her child's feet into the moſt violent convulſions; nor, in the intervals of ſenſe, could ſay more than, "Oh! let me not ſee my huſband. I cannot bear the ſight of him again." She remained in this condition the whole night, and with little intermiſſion until the night following—a troubled doze enſued, on awaking from which, ſhe felt her ſenſes, but not her frame, reſtored. The tender Caroline ſeldom left her arms, while her guilty huſband diligently avoided both his wife and child.

Once, however, when he found his lady had not been able to quit his daughter's apartments, he heard the voice of his wife, exclaiming, "my deareſt Caroline, grieve not, all will be well ſoon;" on which he took himſelf down ſtairs, muttering, "this is no time for me; I ſuppoſe ſhe is in one of her damned fits again, and I have had enough of them already."

Her

Her diſorder was on the third day augmented by a fever, in the beginning of which ſhe intreated ſhe might be conveyed to her own chamber—Caroline oppoſed this with ſtrong, but tender controul. "More than my life depends upon it," ſaid lady Stuart; "but do you, my Caroline, and your own woman be my conductors." Finding her fixed on that meaſure, Caroline obeyed in the evening of that day, and aſſuming a ſtrength, which on every other occaſion would have been wanting, and was even now incredible, for ſhe was delicate in the extreme, ſhe folded her ſick parent in her arms, and with ſcarcely any aſſiſtance from the attendant, bore her to her own bed; nor did the pious ſon, the filial example of ancient days, when he carried Anchiſes, his aged father, from the flames of Troy, exhibit a ſight ſo touching, as did this fair and duteous daughter, bending under the weight of an agonized and tender mother, kiſſing her burning cheek at every ſtep, and proteſting, that if the breath with which ſhe cooled her feveriſh

 lip,

lip, could infuſe the ſpirit of returning health, ſhe would die with tranſport.

Two long months did the uncomplaining victim endure this bitter viſitation of heaven, during which, amidſt the ſcorchings of her fever, the ſilence of her ſwoons, and the ravings of her delirium, when ſhe would call with piercing ſcreams of terror upon her child, her life-preſerving child, to ſave her from the imagined fury of her huſband—during all theſe was that angelic child, her conſtant nurſe and attendant. Often did ſhe ſteal from her mother's pillow, wet with her tears, and bathe her father's hand with the ſtill dropping tears of filial miſery, to intreat he would come and ſpeak comfort to his diſtracted wife. But the thought that lady Stuart had betrayed his ſecret to Henry and Charles, and the conſequent vengeance he had to expect, with the idea that Caroline had aſſiſted in the plot, made him not only deaf to all her interceſſions, but induced him often to ſpurn her from him with the moſt bitter denunciations, and brutal violence.

—Denniſon,

—Dennifon, alfo, exerted his utmoft power, and would fecretly have called in the affiftance of his young mafter and Henry, had not Caroline, apprehenfive of the fatal confequences that might enfue, enjoined him to keep his lady's illnefs, as long as poffible, from her brother, and every other perfon.

Luckily the enfign was, at this time, in winter quarters, which he could not again quit as well on account of his late frequent trips to the abbey and caftle, as a reprimand from his Colonel; and Henry Fitzorton, who lived within a very few fhort miles of this houfe of mifery, and who, indeed, refided in the conftant view of it, having appropriated an apartment in the caftle, as did Caroline in the abbey, parallel to that which held the object of his affections, was daily more and more abridged of the power of communicating his griefs even to Charles, by the cruel injunctions, as he then conceived them to be, of the once-complying Caroline; but notwithftanding all thefe lets and hindrances

he never ſuffered a day to paſs without taking his ſolitary circuit round the precincts of the abbey, wandering through its woods, or hiding in its caverns.

At the ſight of Sir Guiſe, or any of the family, when he ruſhed from his haunts, though his heart yearned to make enquiries, he would again plunge into the middle of the foreſt. How did he wiſh to preſent the pacquet which he was ſtill augmenting, and ſtill carried about with him, yet without daring to profit, even of opportunity! Alas! twice ſince his baniſhment had he attempted to gain admittance for his letters, by the medium of Denniſon, and twice received them back unopened.

If after this he met the faithful Steward, he would ſtill run to him, as to an aſſured friend, and eaſe his afflicted ſoul by haſty interrogations, which, ſince the unfortunate delivery of the letters, the poor old man could only anſwer with ſorrowful looks, that ſent the wretched wanderer away more miſerable. Sometimes would he paſs the darkeſt night, ſtormy and bitter,

bitter, beneath a clump of venerable oaks, mingled with cypreſs, that encircled her chamber; to the window of which he would direct his eyes, and addreſs his prayers, liſtening to every ſound that came from within and without. Thus would he remain until the unwelcome light of the morning drove him again into his leafy concealments.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A LAST SCENE.

AT the end of the third month of lady Stuart's ſickneſs, in the courſe of which the merciless fever had nearly drunk her ſpirits, withered her heart, and dried her blood; and when inceſſant watchings and ſympathizing griefs had reduced her ſtill aſſiduous child almoſt to a like condition, the maternal martyr, feeling that the ſilver chord of life was almoſt broken, pointed to a little cabinet of ſilver, curiouſly inwrought, which ſtood at the edge of her dreſſing table.—Being brought, ſhe gave

the key of it to Caroline, and pointed to a locket that hung to her boſom, deſiring Caroline to touch the ſpring which would preſent her with another key. "And that key, my child," ſaid her ladyſhip, "will diſcover what the drawers in the cabinet contain."

From a cover of pea-green ſilk, lady Stuart took from the innermoſt cabinet three ſmall boxes inveloped in as many caſes; and her whole frame was under viſible agitation. Thrice ſhe ſunk down on her pillow, and roſe to reſume her labour; at length ſhe produced from their coverings the miniatures of her own father and mother: ſhe looked at them alternately for ſome time, preſſing them by turns to her boſom, and then gave them to Caroline. —" My deareſt child, when theſe were firſt beſtowed upon me, the oath of my ſecret ſoul was given to my God, never to part with them, but in the laſt hour of my life, nor even then, unleſs I could bequeath them to one whom I was aſſured would value them even, if that were poſſible, as

I have

I have done—elſe, it was part of my vow, to have them buried with me on my boſom, neareſt to my heart. That hour is come."

Caroline's own heart appeared to wither at the words. "That hour is come," reiterated lady Stuart, with a ſmile, as if to ſoften the intelligence, "and my daughter will prize the legacy as tenderly as did her mother. Take them, my Caroline—Ere many moments more ſhall be numbered, I truſt in the Supreme I ſhall again behold the originals, but until you, my child, join us in a better world, theſe faint copies ſhall give you the images of two of the beſt, nobleſt, wiſeſt, deareſt, of human beings."

Caroline received the miniatures in the eloquence of ſolemn ſorrow, yet uttered not a word, nor ſhed a tear.

"They were the gift of my dear parents upon my bridal day. From that day was expected more happineſs, perhaps, than I have ever deſerved; but to whatever cauſe, alas! my bitter diſappointment might be owing, I will not, cannot, call it a day

 accurſed,

accurſed, ſince my child has been a recompence for a whole life of miſery. Let me preſs once more the precious reſemblances to theſe adoring lips, and then they are thine, my love, until it ſhall pleaſe Providence to bring thee alſo, to the bed of death. There ſhouldeſt thou find thyſelf parent of a child like thyſelf, and as worthy to be truſted with a pledge ſo ineſtimable, let them accompany thy parting benediction, even as they do mine; if not, let them repoſe upon thy filial boſom, whereon I now imprint the laſt maternal kiſs—O, let them deſcend with thee into that tomb, where it is my lateſt charge, whoſoever may go before thee, to take eſpecial care thy remains are placed as near to thoſe of thy mother, as thou art at this, her dying moment!"

The latter part of this ſpeech ſhe articulated with great difficulty, and with many interruptions for renovated power of utterance.

Caroline raiſed and reclined her by turns, but was ſtill ſilent—hearing voices below, ſhe

ſhe appeared ſomewhat moved, and lady Stuart was agitated. The latter, however, recovering, gently ſaid, "If Sir Guiſe ſhould chance to come, my love, let him be admitted, and if he ſhould not, you will not forget to tell him, that more than one prayer for him has paſt my lips, and thouſands have been offered up, in ſilence, from my ſoul."

Here Caroline firſt found a voice—"Unuſed to griefs of this nature, perhaps he is now mourning apart—O, if any ſenſation rebukes him at a moment like this, his abſence is kind, and he is more to be commiſerated than his child."

Lady Stuart roſe with energy to embrace Caroline, and then taking up the ſilken caſe, which encloſed the third miniature, ſhe ſaid, "This too, thou frequent preſerver of the life I am about to lay down, will be dear to thee. It is a likeneſs of what was once thy mother; alas! how changed."

As Caroline was placing it in her boſom, ſhe looked at the ſimilitude of the once

blooming happy maid, now broken-hearted wife, and abruptly turned her head, to hide from her dying parent, the agony that rose out of the comparison.

After this, lady Stuart lay for near a quarter of an hour, as in death, during which, a gentle tapping was given at the door of her chamber, heard only by the female attendant; Caroline being absorbed, with her eyes fixed on those of her mother: and as she reclined her lips near those of lady Stuart, to catch the last aspiration of life, her woman past softly, and unperceived, to the door.—"Hush!" said the person that entered, making at the same time signs of silence, and moving on tiptoe. The maid gently drew the curtain of the bed, on the door side, to its extent. A soft tread was again heard on the stairs, but the appearance of the physician, in the next instant, seemed to explain it. Caroline, delivering her mother's hand into the physician's, said, with trembling hope—"she has a pulse, Sir, and I felt her breath this instant on my cheek." "Yes, there is life,"

life," replied the doctor, " but, alas! ſo little, that a few more imperfect pulſations, and probably"—" For pity's ſake," interpoſed Caroline, "anticipate not her death—I fear, I fear I am not yet prepared to bear it." Lady Stuart began to move her lips, and then, without opening her eyes, ejaculated faintly—" Help, Caroline, help me to bleſs your brother, my always good and tender Charles." A whiſpered voice from the other ſide, ſcarcely more forcible than that of Lady Stuart, breathed forth—" She ſpeaks!"

" And if departed ſouls," continued her ladyſhip, " are permitted to know, and to feel the concerns, of what was moſt dear to them in this mortal world"——

She made a ſecond pauſe, to gain ſtrength, for the tide of life had nearly ebbed away.

" My firſt prayer to the fountain of all good, ſhall be"——

A third time ſhe wanted breath.

" Yes, my firſt prayer to the great diſpoſer ſhall be, that Caroline and Henry"

"Good God! can this be ſupported?" whiſpered a voice more faint than the former.

Caroline turned, as if ſhe had indiſtinctly heard the ſounds, but in the next moment a lengthened ſigh from lady Stuart recalled her whole attention.

"That is her laſt," ſaid the phyſician. —"Laſt! O God! O God! my mother is dead," reſumed the voice on the other ſide.

Caroline ſtarted.

"Your mother," rejoined the phyſician, addreſſing himſelf to that part of the room from whence the voice was heard, "is now an angel in heaven." The oppoſite curtains were ſuddenly thrown aſide, preſenting to the aſtoniſhed view of Caroline, her brother and Henry Fitzorton ſtanding ſide by ſide, and holding the curtain in their hands to ſupport them.

A ſhriek, which ſeemed to be the burſt of her long accumulating, and long ſuppreſſed emotions, broke from Caroline, as ſhe ſunk to the floor, like one who had been ſtricken with ſudden death. Henry

ran round to the other ſide of the bed, and caught her in his arms, while Charles aſſiſted to convey her to the air of the window, which the phyſician had thrown open for that purpoſe. Mean while the terror-ſtruck attendants ran down ſtairs for the uſual reſtoratives, exclaiming, "My dear young miſtreſs, and my lady, are dead! both dead!—where is Sir Guiſe? where is my maſter?"

The Baronet and Denniſon were at this time together: the latter, not expecting his lady to be ſo near her end, was trying to keep his maſter in converſation till Charles and Henry, to whom he had opened the door, had come down ſtairs. This ſudden alarm, however, hurried him out of his recollection, and rather dragging than leading his maſter, who was himſelf bewildered, they got into the chamber before Caroline had recovered from her ſwoon, or any of the parties had altered their poſition, ſave that the cheek of Caroline, utterly unconſcious of a preſſure, was repoſing upon that of Henry.

A new

A new language muſt be invented, before a juſt deſcription can be given of Sir Guiſe in this ſcene; his figure, attitude, and look, denoted ten thouſand emotions, ſubordinate to one, however, which, like Aaron's ſerpent, ſwallowed up the reſt.—"Hell! and its choſen fiends! what do I ſee?" exclaimed he.—On ſeeing Sir Guiſe, Caroline ſunk from Henry's arms on her knees, and dropt, as if deprived of life, at her father's feet; yet nothing now ſeemed to have attraction for her father, but Henry Fitzorton, on whom he ſtill fixed his ſtaring eye, until the almoſt ideot ſteadineſs of his gaze, drew, at length, the eyes of Caroline to the ſame object.

Amidſt the diſtraction of confuſed ſenſations, ſhe ſprung from him; but her brother perceiving a dreadful intent brooding in the fell ſoul of Sir Guiſe, then too violently agitated to attend to conſequences, advanced towards him---"Forbear, deſtroyer, to add the broken heart of thy daughter, and the diſtraction of thy ſon, to the murder of thy wife." "Thy

life," ſaid Henry, approaching him, "depends ſolely upon thy child's! Beware!"—But Sir Guiſe, driven by his foaming rage out of every prudent paſſion, ſtill cheriſhed a deſperate purpoſe, when Caroline, with that preſence of mind, which never but in the abſence of ſenſe wholly forſook her, undrew the curtain between Sir Guiſe and her mother's corpſe, and then led her father towards the bed with one hand, while with the other ſhe pointed to the body; but not a ſyllable eſcaped her lips. O weakneſs of human language! what form of words could have added energy to ſuch a ſilence? The heart of the hardened quaked under it. "Unnatural! behold the work of thy hands," ſaid the ſon, dropping on his knees, and preſſing his mother's clay-cold hand fervently to his lips---Henry again whiſpered Sir Guiſe "To beware!" but Charles, now almoſt frantick with grief for the loſs of a parent, whom he loved tenderly, and maddening with reſentment againſt her deſtroyer, would certainly have completed the horrors

of

of this chamber of deſpair and death, had not Henry, Denniſon, and Caroline, thrown themſelves between the father and the ſon. Unable, however, for the moment, to ſeparate the parent from the criminal, no oppoſing force could prevent the noble and indignant youth from dragging down Sir Guiſe on his knees, and ſwearing by the angel-ſpirit of his departed mother, that if he did not that inſtant beſeech forgiveneſs of the murdered ſaint now ſtretched before him, no power on earth ſhould make him endure the ſight of him again, but he would brand him as the aſſaſſin of the innocent, until the habitable earth ſhould not contain a corner to ſhield from ſcorn his opprobrious head.

Sir Guiſe, divided between the miſcreant emotions of fear and ſhame, folded his hands together, and muttered ſomething like a ſorrow for what had happened; then being permitted to riſe up, he ſlunk, like a detected robber, out of the room.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A WOUNDED CHILD.

THUS died the excellent and gentle lady Stuart, and ſuch were the events which happened immediately after ſhe had expired.---Had ſhe lived an hour longer, her laſt moments muſt have been diſturbed by ſcenes which, in her firmeſt health, ſhe had neither ſpirits nor ſtrength to ſupport.

Should the untimely fate of this lady have drawn from the reader, therefore, a tear of grief, another of conſolation will ſucceed; as he reflects that ſhe was then diſmiſſed to the realms of eternal reſt, amidſt the calm of innocence, the peace of virtue, and love of the good.

The next point we have to ſettle with the reader, is the unexpected appearance of Charles and Henry; to ſatisfy him on which head, he muſt be informed, that Henry having by letter acquainted his friend

friend of the news that had been imparted to him, reſpecting lady Stuart's declining health: Charles communicated the tidings to his colonel, obſerving at the ſame time, that though his duty, as an officer, was dear to him as his own life, the duty that he owed to, perhaps, a dying mother, was dearer ſtill. His colonel, touched with an ardour like his own, replied, "Take my hand, young ſoldier, and with it, take, not my conſent only, but my command, to remain with your mother as long as your ſociety can adminiſter to her one comfortable moment; and if you return from your poſt ſooner, damn me, if I do not give my vote to have you broke—aye, and you would deſerve to be ſhot more than any deſerter upon earth, and that for diſobedience as well of my orders, as of thoſe of my ſuperior, the great god of nature himſelf. And as to your abſence, were it even on the day of battle, my boy, by the god of war, I would fight with a ſword in each hand, as your ſubſtitute; aye, and do you juſtice too upon the enemy: ſo march my lad, and don't ſtay

any

any longer here to parley—but here's a letter, I received from a brother officer, which came to me a few posts ago, and in which you are concerned; you may read it on the road; time is now precious." Charles pressed his colonel's hand to his glowing cheek, bowed, and disappeared. Post-horses, and the travel of night and day, brought him with breathless haste in the twilight of the second day's journey to the gate of the abbey, where being met by Henry, who was at that time taking his evening round of solitary sorrow—"My Friend," said Charles, alighting from his horse, "do I behold Henry Fitzorton?"—"O, Charles!" replied Henry, "this has been my night's sojourn—these woods have so long received me, that I now seem to be one of their natural inhabitants."

"Does my mother yet live?" demanded Charles "and how is my poor sister?" then, without waiting a reply, he took Henry by the hand, and would have thundered for admittance at the abbey-door, had not the thought of the sick

lady

lady Stuart intervened. He gave, therefore, a more gentle ſummons, which being luckily anſwered by Denniſon, who was, at that moment, ſitting penſive in the cloiſters of the grand entrance, "Help me, good old man," ſaid Charles, "to aſcend the chamber of a dying mother, and of a ſiſter, who, I fear, alas!"—"Siſter!" ſaid the terror-ſtricken Henry. He had neither time nor breath to utter more, for Charles trembled like himſelf, at every ſtep, as he paſſed the cloiſters. At remote diſtances lamps were hung on the pillars; their footſteps reverberated a ſound that was portentous and ſepulchral; the veteran, who accompanied them, whiſpered, "Leſs noiſe! dear young maſter, leſs noiſe!" and when the impatient, but tender youth, and his friend, had gained the back ſtaircaſe, Denniſon diſappeared, and ſought Sir Guiſe, for the purpoſe already related.

There remains but one circumſtance more, therefore, to be ſettled with the reader, and that is, the letter that Charles Stuart's worthy colonel gave that heroick youth

youth at parting. This will beſt explain itſelf, as well as the parties concerned.

'To Colonel Forbes.

'Dear Sir,

'A young officer of merit has the honour 'to be under your command, whoſe name 'is Charles Stuart. As it is poſſible, from 'a recent event, that his reputation may be 'involved in the diſgrace that attaches to 'one who is but too much honoured in 'bearing the ſame name, and being of the 'ſame family, it is my bounden duty, as a 'party in the buſineſs, to appriſe you, that 'the conduct of that young officer would 'entitle him, were it known, to the con-'gratulations of the whole army. If any 'whiſpers, to Mr. Stuart's diſadvantage, 'ſhould reach his regiment, I ſhall be 'ready to give in ſuch evidence, on the 'honour of a ſoldier, as will fix him in the 'higheſt rank of conſideration. To this 'end, ſhould my perſonal attendance, 'ſhould my ſword, ſhould even my life

'be

'be neceſſary, I would attend your ſum-'mons.

'Meanwhile, I rejoice to know that he 'is in protection of Colonel Forbes.

'I have the honour to be,

'Sir, your obedient ſervant,

Fitzorton-Caſtle. 'JOHN FITZORTON.'

Sir Guiſe, from want of honour and good faith in himſelf, ſuſpecting every body elſe, ſuppoſed Caroline had betrayed him to Henry, that Henry had of courſe imparted it to Charles; and that he had the juſt reſentment of both; took refuge in the moſt obſcure and remote part of the old buildings, ſeparated from the tenanted part of the abbey, and could he, by any means whatever, have ſhaken off old Denniſon, he would have gone alone: although it was now ſome hours before break of day, and he was both timid and ſuperſtitious.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE COWARDICE OF GUILT.

INDEED his hiding place was well fitted to the darkneſs of his ſpirit, the daſtardy of his guilt, and the fears that are natural to both. It was ſituate in a part of the abbey, which, from being long untenanted, had fallen into decay, inſomuch, that the chatter of the daw, the croak of the toad, and the heavy wing of the raven, and of other birds that ſeem to delight in the ruin of human grandeur and ambition, were heard through the broken apertures, which time, that great diſmantler of all the laboured towers of vanity, had made in the walls. A number of ſubterraneous paſſages yawned, like cavern mouths, in different parts: gaps alſo were opened in its ſides, through which the wind emitted an hollow ſound, which was hoarſely repeated by the affrighted echo—In ancient days, this gloomy receſs had been, as records teſtified, a place of ſepulture: moreover, it was

damp

damp and desolate to such an extreme, that a chill like that of death ran through the blood as you entered it; in short, it was the last recess that Sir Guise, of all men, would have entered in the hours of darkness, had he not been driven into it by those overwhelming terrors, which now seized upon him.

Often did he look behind, as he traversed the long ailes that led to this Golgotha: and finding neither force nor flattery could get rid of the vigilant Dennison, he submitted to his entering, after drawing across the door, which was knotted with enormous studs of iron, the rusty bolts, that terrified him.

Dennison, whose heart would have done honour to the most exalted, even as it dignified the most humble, station, began to feel towards his master a degree of pity; and, indeed, there is not, perhaps, in the whole world, a more complete object of commiseration, than an unhappy wretch, trembling under a thorough conviction of

his

his own unworthinefs, and flying from the man he has injured.

The good Dennifon on perceiving Sir Guife in great terror, and rightly judging it muft be of his fon and Henry Fitzorton, affured him, in a voice that even guilt itfelf, with all its train of fufpicions, muft have believed, that he might make himfelf quite eafy, as he had left both the young fquires in his poor dead lady's chamber, —" As for her," obferved Dennifon, " fhe is now a faint above all of us; fo all is for the beft, and as fhe could get no happinefs in life, I am glad fhe is gone where fhe is fure to find it. I am crying, to be fure, becaufe I fhall not fee her any more; and I ufed to love to fee her:—fhe was a perfect beauty, you know, when you married her, Sir, and fhe was handfome to the laft; nay, her fweet good foul went out of the world with a fmile; and you might have feen it after fhe was dead, while you were all taken up about Mifs Caroline, who is as good as her mother, and that is faying every thing:—I fay, Sir, while you

were all bufy about poor young lady, who feemed to have a mind to follow her mother to heaven, and, for aught I can tell, may die yet, for fhe has had but a wearifome time of it, and has but weakly health; well—while you were bringing her out of her fit, poor foul, I ftole round to my dear lady, and got within the curtains, and ftood looking at the fmile fhe died with, until my heart was ready to burft. I could have kiffed it, but thought I fhould not be fo bold when fhe was dead, feeing I fhould as foon die myfelf, as think of fuch a think when fhe was alive; and as my boldnefs would have been feen—what does not God and his angels fee, you know, Sir?—every thing, Sir; aye, juft as well in this hole, as in full day time; and, if they did not, a man cannot run from his own wicked heart—fo I only made free to kneel down by her bed-fide, and take my lady's hand; O, 'twas juft like a lump of fnow, only colder and fairer, all to nothing!—you know fhe always had fuch a hand and arm as you fhall not fee, except

except Miſs Caroline's—and I could not help ſaying—' Well, God bleſs you! you are out of your troubles at laſt—I am not ſorry; you were too good for this world, and the beſt always go firſt: you have been a good lady to me, as you was to every body elſe; and, for a mother and wife, I think, I never looked on your like;'—which your honour knows was no more than the truth, though you uſed to be ſo hard with her at times; but, loſt goods are moſt prized; and, I dare ſay, your honour would be ſhut without light until Whitſuntide, in this deſperate hole to have her back again. But all this is no matter, ſhe is in heaven, and you are here ſkulking in this dirty corner—there's the difference; ſo we have nothing to do but make the beſt of a bad matter; but as it would not be pleaſant to ſleep in this old charnel, amongſt owls, toads, and dead men's ſkulls—what I have to ſay is, if you are afraid to meet young maſter, who, to be ſure, is as brave as a lion; ſo is Mr. Henry,—why, I will engage to get them out of the way, and

then come and let your honour know: I would not betray you, even if your honour was a murderer, and man's blood on your hand, if I once ſaid the word. If a man's word cannot be taken, there's an end of him. Thus, you may get to your comfortable bed, and matters will be blown over by the morning."

Sir Guiſe, had not his tongue been chained by his fears, and every limb in ſubjection to the idea that devoured him, would have ſoon checked theſe effuſions; but he now heard them without any interruption, and accepted the propoſal. "I know," ſaid he, "you are to be depended on, Denniſon; and, as I do not chooſe to have any words with my ſon, and as you well know what reaſon I have to diſlike the Fitzortons—though Henry, I own, is the beſt of them,—why, my good Denniſon, you may do as you mention; I am ſure, you would die rather than betray your maſter. Yes, yes; I am not now to learn, Denniſon is to be depended upon: I would truſt him with my life."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE COURAGE OF INNOCENCE.

"So any man might, Sir," quoth the Steward, "if I ſaid it, even if a man ought to be hanged:" Denniſon, however, had, on the preſent occaſion, little left for the farther trial of his integrity, for he found his good-natured deſigns already anticipated by Caroline. This Britiſh daughter, whoſe filial virtues might well contend with thoſe of the moſt celebrated one of older times, met Denniſon juſt as he had regained the habitable part of the abbey;—"Where is my father?" ſhe exclaimed; "I have ſought him wherever I thought it poſſible he ſhould take refuge, but all in vain, and I am in ten thouſand terrors. Have you ſeen him? Is he ſafe? I am almoſt diſtracted. Good God! where can he be gone—why do not you ſpeak?"

The rapidity and confuſion with which ſhe uttered this, made it impoſſible for Denniſon to edge in any thing like a reply

 until

until ſhe had done ſpeaking, and then the honourable ſtruggle of a moment, betwixt the deſire of his heart, to compoſe the fears of his young miſtreſs, and the debate of his conſcience, whether he ought to do ſo by a breach of his word, produced in Denniſon a ſhort heſitation, which Caroline interpreted the worſt way; namely, his reluctance to tell what had happened to his maſter. This fear ſo agitated her that the taper dropped extinguiſhed from her hands, and ſhe herſelf would have followed it, had not the affrighted Denniſon called out—"He lives, dear my lady miſtreſs, he lives, and I will conduct you to him—You would hot harm a worm—he will not be afraid of ſuch an angel as you; only we muſt not ſay any thing to young maſter and Mr. Fitzorton."

"They are ſafe," replied Caroline, ſomewhat recovered, deſiring Denniſon to lead on and never to ſtand for light, but if any was wanted to fetch it afterwards.

"Permit your ſervant then, my lady," ſaid Denniſon; "to be ſo bold to take your hand

hand and be your guide; I dare ſay, I can make out the road, though I never took it above once or twice before in my life, and then in broad day, except juſt now. And for that matter, maſter is but a timmerſome bit of a gentleman, you know, and mayhap will wonder he came for to go to ſuch a hobgoblin old nick of a —— But that's his affair; and as for lights, why we are going, where, on ſuch a night as this—do but hear how the rain beats, and the wind roars, through theſe old piaches—a torch could not ſtand it; no, hardly, and it were in an horn lantern."

All this time Denniſon, gently holding Caroline with one hand, and exploring his way with the other, was retracing his former footſteps—and Caroline at the end of his ſpeech, which though all in whiſper, vibrated back upon them hollow reſponſes, exclaimed—"I care not for light or darkneſs, ſo that you conduct me to my father!"

"Here then we have him, miſs," ſaid Denniſon, "for we have but to get through

this alley, so then into the court-yard, then pass the old tower, then into the back ruins, slipside which, is Deadmen's Corner, and there is master." "Deadmen's Corner! what! in the charnel-house in the old buildings?" exclaimed Caroline.—

"Yes, miss, my lady, there he is sure enough—and glad enough he will be, I warrant him, to get out by this time, for he had never a hat on his head, until, as I was coming out, I clapt mine on it: by the same token, it would not be amiss, before we creep through this hole, which brings us into the ruinations, to throw a bit of a covering over your shoulders."

These words he accompanied by the action suggested, and had his furtout, which he always wore summer and winter, in door and out, buttoned over her before she could guess what he was about.

"God save thee, good miss!" said Dennison, as they gained the open area, "did you see that flash of lightning?—Well, that will light us on a bit; we shall have a fine clap of thunder roll after him, I warrant, presently.

presently. Aye, there he comes—I told you so—and how the wind whizzes the rain in one's face—stop a bit—Its clean, though coarse, miss, I took him out of lavender, of my own drying, this morning —sweet as a rosey, an't he?——"

The Steward was all this time fastening his handkerchief over Caroline's head— "Pull it, my lady, a little more over your pretty face," continued he, "in the way of a hood like; or suppose now, you were to hold the two ends in your mouth in this um fashion—by the same token, this is a terrible night at sea; but there's one who can take care of those who travel by land or by water, you know; though I wish I had my hat upon your head, my lady miss, instead of where it is, too; for 'tis pity O' the world to wet such locks as these-um— alack! you are my ladyship now, more's the mis-hap, for my poor mistress, my lady that was, is all this time where no storms nor tempests can reach her: she is far enough away, thank God, from such things."

The laſt ſentence is the only one in this harangue, or in its accompaniments, that appeared to divide the attention of Caroline from what ſhe was in purſuit of:—neither thunder, lightning, the delay, length, or ruggedneſs of the way, nor the rain that fell upon her, notwithſtanding all honeſt Denniſon's precautions, were deemed worthy of her notice, but at the mention of her mother's ſituation, a long and heavy ſigh, as if from the bottom of her ſoul, burſt from her, and ſhe exclaimed, "Oh! God, Oh! God, never till we join in heaven, Denniſon, ſhall we behold ſuch another woman!"——

"That's a ſure thing, miſs, and God forgive me, I was going to ſay, nor then neither, except your ladyſhip's ſelf---yet, with reverence, I might have ſaid it too —for were there more angels than a body could count, you and ſhe ſhall be amongſt the firſt of them—ſo don't grieve, miſs, any more. For ſhe is better off than we a thouſand to one, though inſtead of being thus pelted, we were in the midſt of ſummer,

mer, on a funfhiny day.—But we have got to Abbot's Bafon, and—aye, here we have it—I now have got to the door—I have my hand on one of the nails—They are bigger, mifs, than your little fift—fo now for it."

Saying this, Dennifon tapped at the door, which Sir Guife, on recognizing the voice, opened, and Dennifon entered, leading in Caroline.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

A CONTINUED flafhing of the lightning, however, affifted by the faint approaches of the dawn, threw light enough upon them, to difcover that the companion of Dennifon was habited as a man; Sir Guife, therefore, affifted by his guilty fears, eafily magnified the poor unoffending Caroline either into his angry fon, Charles, or the vindictive Henry Fitzorton. Under this apprehenfion, he fhrunk back to the fartheft

corner of the diſmal cell, and in a voice more fearful than the thunder that rattled over the ruins, cried out, "Villain! you have betrayed me, and have brought either my hated enemy, or my own rebellious child, to aſſaſſinate me." "Your own child, ſure enough ſhe is," ſaid Denniſon, "but I do not think ſhe would aſſaſſinate, as you call it, the gnat that ſtung her pretty face; it is, miſs Caroline, buttoned up in my old weatherall, and by the ſame token, as the rain don't ſeem to give over, I ſhall make bold with my hat off your honour's head, ſeeing a man has a right to take his own wherever he can find it, and my old handkerchief that I have tied, you ſee, under madam's little chin, is handſomely ſoaked by this time."

While Denniſon was ſaying this, Caroline had run to her father, and convinced him ſhe came in her accuſtomed character, as the meſſenger of peace, and took the hat, which Denniſon had transferred from father to daughter, and replaced it upon that head which leſs deſerved protection,

ten-

tenderly exclaiming, " For goodnefs fake, my dear Sir, let me conduct you from this dreadful place to your own apartment, and do you go before, Dennifon, and fetch a light"—" As to light, madam, as I told you before, we can have none but that which God fends us, and muft e'en go back as we came, and for that matter, it lightens fo, you may fee to pick a pin up, though between whiles, it is as dark as my hat."

Sir Guife exclaimed, " I'll not ftir, I tell you, until Charles is in bed, and that fellow, to whom you, Caroline, have betrayed me, and whom you brought into the abbey after you had forbidden him, is out of my houfe."

Caroline now perceiving the nature of his fears, and of his miftake, " affured him, that fo far from being privy to Mr. Fitzorton's gaining entrance into the abbey, her furprize was equal to her father's, on feeing him in her poor mother's chamber."

" O, your

"O, your honour, I can ſet that right," ſaid Denniſon. The good old man then related the circumſtances of Henry's being brought in by Charles, in conſequence of a letter ſent by the former, reſpecting lady Stuart's dangerous ſickneſs, and other particulars, with which the reader is already acquainted.

Cowardice itſelf, born, as it often is, of conſcious crimes, though in the caſe of Sir Guiſe, it was a timid daſtardy of conſtitution, aggravated by guilt, and, indeed, by every thing that pointed at perſonal danger, might have caught encouragement from ſuch explanations, and ſuch explainers. Sir Guiſe, therefore, ſuffered himſelf to be conducted out of the Golgotha by his daughter, and ſoon regained the inhabited part of the abbey. Hearing from one of his ſervants, that Mr. Henry Fitzorton was gone home to the caſtle, but that the captain had returned, and was gone to bed, he ſtole up the back-ſtairs on tiptoe to his own apartment, like a thief in the night, leaving Denniſon and his

his daughter to diſpoſe of themſelves as they thought proper.

"If, my good Denniſon, you are not too wet and weary," ſaid the gentle Caroline, as ſhe deſcended the ſtairs from the apartment of her father, "if, indeed, you are not quite worn out, I wiſh you would betake yourſelf to my brother's chamber-door, and wait there until you hear him ſtirring in the morning, then do not fail to let me know before he can poſſibly come down ſtairs.—You will find me in my poor mother's apartment, which, alas! I have quitted too long; but you know, my good Denniſon, it has been unavoidable."—"Wet, and weary!" anſwered Denniſon, "why if you will promiſe to put on ſomething dry, and take a drop of ſomething comfortable yourſelf, and a bit of a nap, I would ſtand up to the chin for half a day in one of our old moats! I have got ſome rare ſtingo, miſs, in my cloſet here hard-by, will keep the cold out of your ſtomach curiouſly, I warrant him, a perfect cordial."—"I am glad you mentioned it," ſaid

ſaid Caroline, "a glaſs of it, may, perhaps, do my father good, after ſtanding ſo long in that miſerable place: I will take it to him directly; and you know, Denniſon, you may at the ſame time carry another to my brother, for he too has been expoſing himſelf this ſhocking night,—alas, I wiſh this had been mentioned before his—his—his—friend went of the houſe, for—though—Hen—Henry—Mr.--Henry Fitzorton has done ſomething very much to diſpleaſe me, I don't bear him the leaſt ill will, Denniſon." "Ill will, miſs! why you love him as well as you do the eyes in your head, and he the ſame! and both of you know it,—and I hope you will both come together yet—for all this. Don't you remember my poor lady's dying words about it?"

Denniſon, who the reader remembers always held diſcourſe, and did buſineſs at the ſame time, had now unlocked his cloſet, and produced a goodly ſtone bottle that promiſed comfort, and while Denniſon was pouring ſome of its contents into a little glaſs

glaſs that ſtood beſide it, and was its conſtant companion, he cried, "Miſs, if you don't take off this thimbleful to the poor young gentleman's health, neither my young nor my old maſter, ſaving your preſence, ſhall have a drop of it, if it were to ſave their lives! I am ſure," added he, holding it to Caroline's lips, "if Squire Henry did but know we were drinking his health, he would not mind the wet weather, no, not even if he had been drawn through a horſe-pond.—I know what true love is, as well as either of you; but all this time you're in your damp clothes, ſo warm the inſide firſt with this, and then I promiſe to do as you deſire."

While Caroline preſſed her lip on the glaſs, he ſaid, "Now remember, miſs, you are drinking the health of young Squire Fitzorton."

Caroline ſighed, gave the good old man a preſſure of the hand, and begged him to pour out another glaſs for Sir Guiſe.—"Certainly, miſs," ſaid he, "but not before I have done honour to your ladyſhip's

firſt

first toast in this kind of manner," here he took off a bumper; and filling the glass a third time, Caroline took it to her father's chamber-door, where, unable to gain admittance, though she heard him move, and told her errand, she was obliged to bring it back to Dennison, who carried it to her brother, with charge, however, not to disturb him if he appeared to be asleep.

Thus they separated to their different occupations; Dennison, who in Caroline's absence had thrown on some dry clothes, to keep guard at his young master's door, and Caroline to the corpse of her dead mother.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SACRED SORROWS.

WE mnst there leave them awhile, in their respective stations, to see what happened in lady Stuart's chamber, after it had been left in such disorder by Sir Guise, Caroline, Dennison, and the physician: for besides

besides the interest which, we trust, the reader will now take in whatever concerns young Henry, and his friend Charles, the amiable Caroline had concealed several matters which it is necessary, to the connection of the history, the reader should know.

For some time after the young friends were left together, Charles was so agitated by grief for the loss of his mother, and resentment against his father, whom he looked upon as the entire author of her death; and the whole scene appeared to Henry so powerful an enchantment, that their eyes were, alternately, fastened upon the living and upon the dead, without speech or motion. At length the tender-hearted Charles, as if no longer able to support the view, flung his arms around his friend, and looking on the corpse, exclaimed,—"O Henry! one of the strongest ties of my life is there rent asunder; yet shall not those which remain be the more precious? but you must not consider this effusion of excessive sorrow for the untimely,

timely, I fear the unnatural fate of that excellent parent, as my weakneſs."

Henry, who was ſufficiently touched before, now joined his ſighs and tears in generous ſympathy, but exhorted him to withdraw from the ſight.—"When I have preſſed upon this cold maternal lip one kiſs," continued Charles, "it ſhall be ſo;" in ſtooping down to do which he diſcovered the little caſe out of which his ſiſter had taken the miniatures which, as the reader already knows, ſhe had ſafely depoſited. The cabinet ſtill remained; and in the confuſion of lady Stuart's laſt moments, or perhaps from deſign, it had got between her face and her pillow, and in that ſituation was it found by Charles. And now a diſcovery was made, which threw Henry into a ſtate impoſſible to deſcribe; for the miniatures of his beloved Caroline, and of his friend Charles, were at the bottom of the cabinet; and as the excellent mother did not bequeath theſe to her daughter, or even mention them with that of herſelf, or thoſe of her parents, ſhe probably deſigned

to

to have had them buried with her. Henry being unable to ſpeak, looked thoſe unutterable wiſhes, which Charles eaſily interpreted, exclaiming, "Yes, deareſt of my friends! they ſhall be yours! both yours! does not the ſituation in which I found them, ſeem to whiſper to us, that they received a mother's bleſſing with her lateſt breath?"

Henry took the miniatures with a trembling hand, and preſſing them to his lips, put them haſtily into his boſom ſaying only, "This is their proper manſion, they are here at home." "But where," exclaimed Charles, "is the aſſaſſin of our peace? that inhuman, I will not outrage the ſacred name by calling him father! where has his atrocious guilt hid itſelf from his deſolated, his degraded ſon? He has murdered my mother, and is making my ſiſter cruel as himſelf: perhaps ſhe is now protecting him from my juſt and pious indignation!"

"If the memory of your deceaſed mother, whoſe ſpirit may, perhaps, be now diſturbed

diſturbed in heaven itſelf, by the knowledge of our indecent ill-timed contentions, be dear, my friend," ſaid Henry, "do not attempt to find Sir Guiſe, whatever aſylum he may have choſen, while the ſacred corpſe of your dear mother is yet in the chamber that gave you and Caroline birth! rather, ah! rather aid her, to perform the laſt ſad offices with filial decency and chriſtian reſignation."

Charles melted as he heard—and embracing his friend, "Well," ſaid the generous youth, "it ſhall be ſo; I will try to conduct myſelf in every thing at this aweful criſis, as your piety ſuggeſts. Were it not for my ſiſter's ſake," continued the lieutenant, "I would leave the houſe this moment, never to return; and, indeed, it is not ſafe, my friend, for me to remain here any longer at preſent: ſhould I meet with the author of all our miſeries, I fear neither the living nor the dead will make me remember my promiſes." In this diſpoſition Charles and Henry left the abbey.

Caroline re-entered her mother's apartment at midnight, when addreffing the attendants who were fitting up with the body, fhe faid fhe chofe now to undertake that office herfelf, and defired they might go to reft. The reader is fufficiently acquainted with the mind of Caroline Stuart to know, that the dutiful oppofition which was made to this, on the part of the fervants, effected no change in her defigns, though it received the kindeft acknowledgment. One of the chambermaids intreated fhe might fit by the corpfe of her dear lady, protefting fhe would lay down her life to reftore her. "And if my young miftrefs will go to bed," exclaimed another, "I will engage not to have a wink of fleep get into my eyes for a month, if my miftrefs's precious remains could be preferved above ground."

When Caroline was left alone, fhe feated herfelf by the fide of her bed, without any of the ordinary terrors on being in the room with the dead. Various are the inftances we have already given the reader, of her

 extra-

extraordinary ſtrength of mind. It was that alone, which enabled her to ſupport the fatigues and miſeries of the paſt memorable ſcenes; and it now aſſiſted her to perform other offices which her love ſuggeſted.

The pride of female youth, even as it was diſplayed in the redundant locks of Caroline, ſurpaſſed not thoſe beautiful treſſes which ſtill adorned her mother. Caroline paſſed ſome time in adjuſting theſe with as much care, though with the ſtricteſt homage to nature, as if her mother were alive. She parted them, ſpread them over the ſhoulders, diſpoſed them into ringlets, talked to them, preſſed them to her lips, and bathed them with her tears. Looking earneſtly in her mother's face, ſhe could ſometimes fancy ſhe was about to ſpeak. She perceived the ſmile which Denniſon had ſo artleſsly celebrated, ſtill impreſſed: at length, ſhe confined the hair under a ſimple veil of white crape, as her mother had directed, and after a thouſand other tenderneſſes,—which, if the

the reader has not a heart to take an intereſt in, we can only condole with or congratulate him upon it, which he likes beſt —ſhe felt herſelf weighed down by the different occurrences of the night, and taking her mother's cold hand in her own, ſhe lay down by her ſide, and fell into a ſounder ſleep, than, it is probable, her guilty father had enjoyed during the night.

The ſun and Charles Stuart roſe together, and the truſty Denniſon came to the door of his lady's apartment to announce, —ſaying, "My young maſter is ſtirring, madam, and on ringing his bell, I went myſelf to receive his orders, which were to get his horſes ready, and ſend up his boots and ſpurs immediately; ſo, calling his own man to do theſe things, I came, as promiſed, to let you know it, miſs:—and here you have never had your clothes off I ſee, and I ſuppoſe have been lying by the ſide of my poor lady all this time; aye, here is the length of ye; and I can ſee you have juſt let go that cold hand. For that matter, my young maſter had but a weari-

ſome time of it any more than yourſelf; I heard him very reſtleſs, and taking on piteouſly, for I did not budge an inch, and he called out by times upon his mother and yourſelf, miſs, and Squire Henry; and once I heard him ſay, poor Denniſon! More than all he mentioned the name of Olivia, which as I take it, is the name of the young lady now come down again to paſs the ſummer with her father at the manor-houſe."

"Olivia!" ſaid Caroline, "what Olivia Clare! ſince our infant days we have not met, alas! we then were tender friends; but I have heard ſhe is ——" "As pretty a creature, they tell me," interpoſed Denniſon, "as yourſelf, miſs. Yes, my young maſter mentioned her, and ſighed ſo between whiles, that for my part, I believe —yet, for certain if it is ſo, its a ſecret, or elſe we ſhould, ſome of us, have heard of it. I remember I, myſelf was given to talk about my love before any body elſe knew any thing of the matter. By this you will ſay I muſt be a blabbing old fellow to tell

you

you of it, and I ſhould ſay ſo too, only I look upon you to be another himſelf, as I may ſay, and, mayhap, may ſtand his friend in this affair; for, you know, if he ſhould have taken a fancy to this miſs Olivia, ſeeing our houſe and theirs do not ſet their horſes' heads very well together, there will be a fine coil, ſpeciouſly as we are papiſhes, and they are proteſtants, you know, miſs."

Denniſon, who though he had the garrulity of age, and loved a long ſtory at his heart, had, alſo, the active diligence of youth. He contrived his narrations ſo as to recite them, and do other buſineſs at the ſame time; in ſo much, that he would frequently carry on a debate, or continue a ſtory for miles together; and, according to the given diſtance, compreſs his facts and effuſions ſo as to finiſh his harangue and his errand together, or rather, to end his harangue where his errand begun; and when this could not be done, he would break his ſtory off ſhort, with a promiſe to give you the reſt another time; a promiſe which he would always ſooner or later fulfil, taking

it up at the very ſentence, and ſometimes with the very word which he left off, as if no interruption had happened, prefacing it only, "and ſo as I was ſaying;" and would then proceed, either until he had done, or met with a ſecond interruption.

The foregoing harangue was performed by Denniſon, almoſt at full ſpeed; for the inſtant Caroline was informed of her brother's preparing to ride out at ſo early an hour, ſhe haſtened down ſtairs, followed by our orator, and met the lieutenant juſt as he was leaving his apartment. They ſaluted each other with all the tenderneſs of affection; ſoon after which, Charles deſired to ſpeak with his ſiſter alone, and, diſmiſſing Denniſon, took her by the hand and walked into the garden, which ſeparated the caſtle from the park. "I muſt leave the abbey, my dear Caroline," ſaid Charles; "I feel there is no other way to obſerve thoſe decorums which the preſent ſituation of the family require. I dare not truſt myſelf with another ſight of my poor mother's remains, much leſs aſſiſt at that ceremony

ceremony which ſhall convey them to the cold grave; neither dare I, in the preſent diſorder of my mind, hazard the preſence of one to whoſe account I continue to ſet down the loſs of a mother; ah! deareſt ſiſter, deem me not unkind, unfilial, unnatural. It is to avoid a violation of the duties I owe to the honoured dead, that I withdraw myſelf from the living parent, at this aweful period."—Charles was unable to proceed; and, tenderly embracing his ſiſter, went haſtily towards a gate that led to the ſtables, and mounting his horſe rode away.

Although the ſociety of ſuch a brother would, at ſo aweful a period, have been in the higheſt degree acceptable to ſuch a ſiſter; although likewiſe, the idea which Denniſon had ſtarted, reſpecting his attachment to Olivia, and his own obſervation that there were "other motives" which made it expedient for him to quit the abbey, created a new intereſt for him in her heart; the reaſons he urged, added to ſome others which her own mind ſuggeſted,

reconciled her to his departure. As ſoon, therefore, as he was gone, ſhe went back to Denniſon, who anticipated the queſtion ſhe began to aſk, by obſerving, that Sir Guiſe had rung his bell, to know whether his ſon was come down ſtairs, and if not, to get his own horſe brought round to the green lane at the back of the abbey wall.

Without waiting any reply, Caroline made the beſt of her way to aſk her father where he would be pleaſed to have breakfaſt, as her brother being under the neceſſity to return to his regiment, had ſet off early, leaving her to perform his duty where it was due.

"You may order breakfaſt in the library," ſaid Sir Guiſe, "and I will come down, and, do you hear, let the groom put up my horſes, I ſhall not go out yet."—The truth is, this daſtardly man, after quaking in his bed for ſome hours, and fancying he heard an enemy in every guſt of wind that forced its paſſage into his room, roſe up with an intention of eſcaping the ſtill dreaded vengeance of Charles,

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by taking ſhelter in the chapel-houſe of Father Arthur, of whom we ſhall preſently make honourable mention.

The good prieſt was an univerſal peace-maker, and well deſerved the 'bleſſedneſs promiſed to perſons of that character, as will be more fully evinced in the courſe of this hiſtory. The Baronet intended to employ this worthy Monk, as he had done on former occaſions, in a treaty betwixt father and ſon. The departure of the ſon, however, made, in the preſent caſe, interceſſions of this kind unneceſſary; and in due time, Sir Guiſe reſumed his haughty character in the family, and dealt his commands about him with as little diſmay as if nothing had happened.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

SOLICITUDES.

AFFAIRS at the abbey being now placed in as quiet a poſture as circumſtances would admit, we may leave it awhile to ſee what befel the family at the caſtle. The anxieties there augmented with thoſe of Henry, whoſe very frequent ſeparations, for whole nights together, and the abſence or agitation of his mind upon his return, ſtill evading explanation, yet ſtill wiſhing to explain, alarmed his friends.

Mean time the health of Olivia fell a martyr to her apprehenſions, which tortured her inceſſantly with a dread of a thouſand evils, and amongſt others, the total overthrow of Henry's ſenſes; an opinion which his ſtrange demeanour ſufficiently juſtified. On the night of lady Stuart's death, Olivia could not be diſſuaded from a preſentiment that ſomething fatal had happened to him; poſſeſſed of which notion, ſhe refuſed taking any repoſe; and. terrible as was

was the night, ill as ſhe was in her own health, ſhe intreated her father to ſuffer her to ſit up and wait his coming home. Her father in vain offered to be himſelf her ſubſtitute, and to bring her an account the moment of his arrival. John and the reſt of the family made the like offer, propoſing that Mr. Clare, whoſe age and infirmities were daily increaſing, ſhould go to reſt. This he peremptorily refuſed, ſaying, "a night's ſleep was leſs to him than they ſuppoſed;" adding, "that ſince his child's illneſs, though he had gone to bed at his uſual hour, he had ſeldom cloſed his eyes."—"I will retire this inſtant, Sir," replied Olivia, "if that will contribute to your reſt."—"No, my dear," rejoined her father, "wrap yourſelf up warm, and I ſhall ſtand a better chance of ſleeping in this arm-chair by the ſide of my Olivia, than in the beſt bed in the world out of her company." The concluſion of the matter was, that none of the family went to bed, except Sir Armine, who had been for ſome time indiſpoſed.

In despite of the best endeavours, however, to quiet the fears of Olivia, they visibly increased with the delay. She ran to the door on the least noise. The thunder and lightning served only to confirm her apprehension that some accident had happened, still repeating, that if there had not, he certainly would have come. In this way, the time passed until his actual arrival. When he came into the apartment where the company were waiting,—the consternation both of Henry and Charles, who, the reader remembers, went out of the abbey with him, was not less at seeing the family still up, than was theirs at observing the condition in which they now appeared:—"I told you so," said Olivia, running to Henry, "My fears were but too true. Good heavens! what has been the matter? tell me, Mr. Stuart what has befallen your friend?"

Though Charles could not but feel that Olivia wholly overlooked his own situation, in her anxiety for that of her beloved Henry, he hastened to relieve her terrors,

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by telling her, that his bleſſed mother, lady Stuart, had died that night; that at his requeſt, Henry had exerted his friendſhip to adminiſter conſolation to the family, under the diſtreſſes of that fatal event.

"Alas!" ſaid Olivia, taking the hand of Charles, "I forget all that Henry has made me ſuffer from his abſence, ſince it was in ſo righteous a cauſe: my little cares are loſt in the contemplation of yours." Fearing ſhe ſhould, by dwelling on the theme, augment his ſorrows, ſhe preſſed his hand to her cheek, which was wet with her tears, and then ran to her own father, as to a treaſure held on a tenure ſo precarious, that ſhe trembled even as ſhe poſſeſſed it. "You may now repoſe, my deareſt father," whiſpered ſhe, caſting a look of affection on Henry, and of pity on Charles, while, with unſpeakable tenderneſs, ſhe conducted her father out of the room.

The reaſons aſſigned by his friend for Henry's late abſences, tended greatly not

only to recover Olivia's health, but to reſtore the family tranquillity; and when on his interview with Sir Armine the next day, he was commended for his care of his friend's family, but blamed for a neglect of his own, Olivia, who though ever the greateſt ſufferer by his abſence, was always the firſt to excuſe it, turned even this heavy charge to his advantage, by ſaying, "Dear Sir, if we had all of us endured ten times more, his motive ought to ſanctify his omiſſion: he knew how much greater grief we ſhould have undergone, had he told us he was ſo often at the abbey attending the ſick, and under the roof of the miſtaken Sir Guiſe Stuart, though you now ſee his friendſhip for Charles exacted his attendance; and for my own part, ſo far as I have been a loſer by being deprived of his ſociety, I declare I ſhould have loved him a little the leſs if he had not attended."

Thus did this innocent girl throw a luſtre about the very myſteries of the man ſhe loved;—thus furniſh an apology, unconſcious

conſcious that it was againſt herſelf, out of the unſuſpicious goodneſs of her own mind, and the almoſt unequalled tenderneſs of her own heart. It was, nevertheleſs with ſecret anguiſh ſhe beheld the effects which the late exertions had upon Henry's health and ſpirits; the muſe and even herſelf neglected; and though ſhe ſubſcribed to the neceſſity of his obeying his friend Charles, reſpecting lady Stuart's funeral, ſhe ſaw the day approach with an anxiety not to be deſcribed, well knowing how ſincere a mourner Henry's gentle nature would make him on that occaſion. Thinking, therefore, that her preſence would ſerve two gracious purpoſes, that of dividing the office of her beloved Henry, and ſoftening the grief of his friend's ſiſter, in whoſe favour ſhe ever retained an intereſt, founded not only on the memory of early attachment, but on what ſhe had heard of her filial piety, ſhe watched her beſt opportunity to offer her ſervices, which were tendered firſt to her own father, and then to St. Armine, with a grace ſo irreſiſtible, that had not an increaſe of her

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own indiſpoſition, on the night preceding the ceremony intercepted her deſign, Olivia Clare would inevitably have met Caroline Stuart; and in ſo doing both would probably have returned home, in deſpite of the aweful ſcene at which they would have aſſiſted, with ſenſations of anguiſh never felt by either of them before.

Henry had ſcarce leſs difficulty to get rid of the importunity of John, who wiſhing, as he ſtrongly expreſſed himſelf, "to make a proper diſtinction betwixt the amiable dead, and the infamous living," and thinking, moreover, it would be a fit occaſion of paying a compliment to a brother officer in diſtreſs, declared his intention to accompany Henry on the morrow. From this dilemma, however, he was alſo relieved by a meſſage from his father, deſiring John to inſpect ſome family papers which required diſpatch; and thus was he reſcued from a diſcovery, which would have been ſcarce leſs fatal to his ſecret, than if it had been detected by Olivia.—James forbore to multiply his perplexity by an offer of himſelf

ſelf in the place of John, becauſe he ſaw plainly, though without at all knowing the reaſon, that Henry preferred going alone.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A MONK.

THE ceremony was performed at a ſmall Catholic chapel belonging to the abbey, but detached from that edifice about a quarter of a mile, in a receſs of the foreſt. In times of old, there had been a ſubterraneous paſſage from the abbey to this little chapel, which had been the family burial-place for many ages. It was awefully picturesque. Within a few paces was a building, whoſe architecture denoted the ſame antiquity, and had been the reſidence of the family prieſts time immemorial. It was now the dwelling of Father Arthur, a Monk of the order of St. Francis, and though he often made excurſions to the metropolis, where his duty, as well as his affections called him, he would, ſometimes, take

take refuge from the world in this ſequeſtered ſpot, which he rented of Sir Guiſe, to whoſe family he adminiſtered whenever he was in the country. As this extraordinary perſonage will, as we have already announced, be frequently under the view of the reader, we cannot take a better occaſion than the preſent, of entering into a few particulars reſpecting his life, converſation, and character.

This diſtinguiſhed Capuchin was deſcended from an ancient and once powerful family in the kingdom of Ireland; but, in the revolutions of that country, had long been deprived of hereditary property, in common with many other illuſtrious names. —The perſonal fortune, however, of his parents, enabled them to give their ſon a private education; and to ſend him into foreign countries to extend his knowledge, as the poſſibility of further improvement was denied him in his own, through the deſpotiſm of penal laws.

Having completed his ſtudies, he diſcovered in his mind a ſtrong bias to a religious

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gious life, and indulged it by entering into the communion of the holy order of Saint Francis. On his ordination, he was appointed chaplain to a regiment, but was removed, and forfeited a penſion, becauſe he would not comply with the requiſition of a foreign ſovereign, to enliſt in his ſervice the ſubjects of the king of his own country: a practice which had continued ſince the formation of a code of ſtatutes which prohibited them from the military ſervice of their own monarch.

Father Arthur connected the wiſdom of the world with the innocence of paſtoral, and even of primitive manners. His benevolence was of the moſt unaffected kind; his piety fervid and ſincere; his manners the moſt winning and artleſs; anticipating his good will and urbanity before he opened his lips; and when they were opened, his expreſſions did but ratify what thoſe manners had before enſured. And you had a farther earneſt of this in the benign and ineffable ſmile of a countenance ſo little practiſed in guile, that it at the ſame time invited

invited to confidence, and denoted an impoſſibility of your being betrayed. But if his ſmile beckoned the worthy to approach, his frown ſtruck terror into the heart of the guilty, and made him dread to advance. Sir Guiſe had more than once felt its potency. His voice was ſonorous, bold, and nervous, correſponding with the manly and ſterling ſenſe it imparted. He had ſtudied with labour, and written with eaſe and energy. His reaſoning was ſound, and his love of liberty a ſteady light, rather than a tranſient blaze; rather the vital principle of an honeſt mind, conſcious of its rights, than the ravings of a factious ſpirit, infected by popular frenzy. All he ſaid and all he did was genuine, even to his moſt trifling ſports. The reader will therefore prejudge the zeal of his devotion. It was glowing, without papiſtic rage; and earneſt, without catholic prejudice.

Our reſpectable Franciſcan diſcovered the cloyſter only in his dreſs and deportment; not that the firſt exhibited his gown of

of coarſe ſerge, his cord, or his roſary, but, that his out-of-faſhion ſuit of ſables hung upon him ſomewhat monaſtically; and the latter was ſtately and inflexible enough to have characteriſed the fellow of one of our colleges. He was nearly ſix feet high; a perfect perpendicular, with a kind of rigour in his muſcles that ſeemed to ſuffer from bending. There was, of courſe, a formality in his bows; and this, in ſome meaſure, extended to his addreſs; but an original vein of humour, and quaint jocularity, rendered him gay with the ſprightly, in the ſame proportion that his more ſolid powers made him ſedate with the grave; it was ſcarcely poſſible to meet a perſon ſo univerſally acceptable to all ranks of people. His ſociety was ſought, and appreciated, by men and women of all perſuaſions, and his life, in all its changes, from the Monk in his cell to the man of the world, from the ſocial friend to the ſolitary recluſe, had been ſo unſpotted, and blameleſs, that to boaſt an acquaintance with

with Father Arthur was an honour; and to poffefs that honour without love and veneration impoffible.

The little romantick fcene in which this domeftick chapel, and its neighbouring habitation were fituate, with the profeffional duties annexed, were amongft the firft gratifications of his innocent heart; and fuch was his predilection for it, that he was wont to confider his migration to the great city as his wanderings into the world, and the chapel houfe as his home.

He had highly revered the character of lady Stuart and her daughter, to footh the anxious hours of whom, he would often fteal at twilight from his beloved chapel-houfe, and pafs his evening at the abbey; taking care, however, even in the bofom of chearfulnefs, never to outftay the twelfth hour; and if he could ever be prevailed on to remain in company after the clock had ftruck that prefcribed period, which he ufed to fay, was dividing the day from the morrow, it was only when, by fuch an in-

fraction

fraction on his general rule, he could be of some service to the party that detained him.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A MOTHER'S BURIAL.

THE chapel-house consisted of four small apartments, a dormitory and scriptorum above; an eating room, and kitchen below. The windows were adorned with paintings from sacred history: every pane containing some figure or fragment of holy writ, of exquisite colouring and delineation. Within the chapel were carved with curious workmanship, various effigies and representations of our Saviour, and the blessed Virgin, all which, as well as every other part of this dwelling, were kept by Father Arthur, and that of his Indian associate,—to whom we promise the reader an introduction,—with a religious care, testifying that the good man believed

believed and inculcated that text which pronounces cleanlineſs to be in alliance with holineſs.

The chapel itſelf, though certainly erected at the time of the abbey, was compleat and in high preſervation. The traditional hiſtory of the place told us, that the chapel was intended for the private devotion of the principal abbot, and the chapel-houſe, if not for his conſtant reſidence, for his occaſional religious retirement; and this, indeed, ſeemed the more likely, as the names of ſome of the chief monks were ſtill legible in the carving about the dwelling; and the name of Stuart was yet to be ſeen on four of the moſt ancient tombs. The burial-place, however, appropriated to the late and preſent branches of the Stuart family, was ſeparated from the reſt of the building by a railing of iron, defending it round; upon your gaining the inſide of which,—this railing being intended for no other purpoſe than to encircle the conſecrated ſpot,—you deſcended a flight of marble ſteps

ſteps until you came to the door of the grand mauſoleum, in which were depoſited the remains of the Stuarts for the three laſt generations, ranged according to the dates of their deceaſe. All this was now laid open, and every preparation made for the burial of lady Stuart, who had deſired the ceremony might be performed with the utmoſt privacy, none attending but ſuch of her own family as choſe to be preſent, in obedience to which her duteous daughter had given the neceſſary inſtructions, aſſembling all the domeſticks about an hour before the time appointed for the ceremony, and enjoining ſuch as intended to give their aſſiſtance, to deport themſelves with that decency and quiet which their miſtreſs had required; but, as the choice of attending or not was left with themſelves, it was a pleaſing proof of that reſpect which was borne to the dead, to ſee that every ſervant of the family, from Denniſon to the moſt menial attendant, had prepared to pay their laſt duty to one whoſe memory ſo well merited their

their veneration. And this inſtance of it was the more genuine, as the deceaſed had it not in her power to make ſuch arrangements at her death, as her generous heart would have prompted. Indeed, it was not without ſome management, ſhe left mourning to Denniſon, and thoſe others of the family whom ſhe nominated as bearers. And even this would have been beyond her ability, ſo mercenary was the wretch to whoſe affluent fortunes ſhe had largely contributed, had it not been for Caroline, who, after muſtering up all the forces of her own ſlender purſe, and finding them inſufficient, reſorted to Denniſon for a reinforcement, inſiſting at the ſame time, upon depoſiting ſome of her moſt valuable trinkets, as ſecurity againſt any accident to herſelf; " And then, my good Denniſon," ſaid ſhe, " I can truly ſay it came from my father, in whoſe ſervice, you know, it was acquired. Sir Guiſe himſelf," added ſhe, " may not like, in this time of our affliction, to be vexed about money matters; and as I heard my mother

expreſs

expreſs her wiſhes yeſterday,—alas! yeſterday, you know, ſhe was alive!—that ſhe could leave ſome little token of her good will to the ſervants, perhaps, ſhe might like to extend the bounty to ſome others."

All oppoſition on the part of Denniſon, as to the depoſit, was fruitleſs, although ſhe knew that the gains of his paſt, and the ſervitude of his future life, would have been joyfully ſurrendered to her diſpoſal. This tranſaction happened before the arrival of Charles from his regiment; but, no ſooner did this generous youth make his appearance, or, more ſtrictly ſpeaking, no ſooner was his mother dead, than he left to his ſiſter's duteous care a ſum, for which he drew on the agent of his regiment, ſufficient to every purpoſe. Yet the ſupply of honeſt Denniſon had its uſe; for as that of Charles did not arrive until after the deceaſe of his mother, the firſt fund was appropriated to the aforeſaid purpoſes, and the ſecond Caroline held in reſerve, intending to return it to her bro-

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ther, knowing the ſcanty profits of his profeſſion, and how often he had forced upon her mother and herſelf thoſe accommodations which ought to have been furniſhed from the coffers of Sir Guiſe.

Amongſt the depoſits from her own little treaſury, we are to reckon all her new guineas, half-guineas, pocket-pieces, and, indeed, every thing that had but the aſpect of currency, except a ſilver penny, which was the firſt keep-ſake of Henry Fitzorton, given in the flowery days of their mutual childhood.

Mean time, it would be a flagrant violation of what was due to Denniſon, not to ſay that he carefully put his young lady's depoſit in his ſtrong box, ſacred and apart, and ſuperſcribed, " Theſe, placed here for ſafety, belong to Miſs Stuart, with ſundry other articles mentioned in my laſt will and teſtament, a copy whereof is within."

Previous to adjuſting this little convention, due praiſe was beſtowed on the conduct of lady Stuart's ſervants in preparing

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themselves for the funeral. And this their behaviour was the more laudable, inasmuch as it was voluntary and disinterested; for although Caroline had, in obedience to her mother's injunctions, an intention to present some little memorial to them all, those afflicting events in which we have seen her involved, had hitherto prevented the distribution of any such memorial, except to Dennison. Unconscious, therefore, that Caroline had any thing in reserve for them, they had, out of the love and good will for their lady, at their own expence, put themselves into habiliments suitable to the solemnity, and would probably have thought an injunction to stay at home on the night their late beloved mistress was to be buried, the only severe duty they ever performed in her service. Caroline, therefore, had scarcely given them permission to follow their inclinations when they thronged about the coffin, as it was bringing down stairs, with a jealousy of gratitude, as if each envied the other a share of the melancholy burthen, accom-

panied by ſuch lamentations as attend only virtue to the tomb.

They were met at the outward porch of the abbey, by the venerable Monk, with ſix aſſiſtants of his order, whom he had convened, bearing the holy crucifix and the lighted torches; and on their receiving the corpſe, they began to chaunt their ſolemn anthems.

The abbey clock ſtruck eleven as they entered the wood, through which the proceſſion moved to the chapel, and from thence, after thoſe ceremonies which the Roman church has ordained, was conveyed to the vault; upon the firſt ſight of which, Caroline, who had ſuſtained herſelf hitherto with a mournful fortitude, that ſerved as an example to the reſt, ſhrunk back and exclaimed, "O God, ſupport me!" Though ſhe had taken a religious care to reſerve a ſpace for her own remains, ſhe could not behold the place where ſhe was to take leave of thoſe of her mother, and at the ſame time ſee herſelf ſurrounded by the mouldering ruins of her anceſtors, and more eſpecially of thoſe who had been the

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originals of the miniatures which were her mother's death-bed legacy—all this ſhe could not behold without a ſenſe of anguiſh not to be controlled; and that of the worthy Denniſon was ſcarcely leſs. Upon the coffin being committed to the place where it was deſtined to repoſe, it was with difficulty the domeſticks could bear the ſight. The venerable Arthur was himſelf deeply affected; for though he had the firmneſs of a man, and the ſubmiſſive virtues of a chriſtian, his affections were warm, and his feelings tender. Caroline approached the body as if to bid it a final farewell. The good man conducted her to the foot of the coffin, at which ſhe kneeled, and the wailings of the attendants, at this aweful moment, reſounded through the vault.

Henry had been traverſing that part of the wood which led to the chapel, ſome hours before the proceſſion began. He joined it ſoon after it had paſſed the abbey gate; but was ſo ſhrouded by the night, the undiſtinguiſhing gleam of the tapers,

and ſtill more by the abſorbing grief which fixed every eye and every heart to its object, as to paſs in the train unſeen. He was unwilling to obtrude himſelf upon his beloved Caroline, in this ſolemn moment of her duty and affliction: a ſentiment which probably would have led him to pay ſilent reſpect to the living and to the dead, without diſcovering himſelf, had not events determined it otherwiſe.

Unable to ſupport the laſt look, and the neceſſity of leaving the vault, Caroline was attempting to riſe when ſhe ſunk upon her mother's coffin, over which ſhe threw her arms in that ſort of dumb deſpair, which could be relieved only by a temporary deprivation of every ſenſe.

A ſight like this was inſupportable to Henry, who, running to the object of his ſoul, exclaimed, "O Caroline! if Charles be dear, be comforted!"—"Charles!" cried Caroline faintly; "and has his grief and duty brought him to this ſad ſpot? Alas, my brother!"—Here, without lifting

ing up her eyes, ſhe claſped her arm around his neck, and wept aloud.—"No" rejoined Henry, "not Charles, but his friend, his repreſentative, appointed by himſelf; of this, if you are not appriſed, the occaſion ſurely juſtifies the treſpaſs, and will urge you to forgive it."—"Forgive it!" anſwered Caroline, withdrawing herſelf from his embrace, yet caſting on him a look of penetrating tenderneſs,—"Are *you* my brother's repreſentative? O! wherefore am I deprived the power of offering the pure incenſe of my heart for ſuch diſintereſted——this generous"—She could not connect theſe unfiniſhed ſentences, and at the end of the laſt, ſhe dropped, rather than reclined, on Henry's ſhoulder.

The widower, we will not call him mourner, willing to avoid the odium of thoſe reports which he foreſaw would go forth againſt him, and dreading to be left at the abbey in no better company than his own reflections,—now when he thought the ceremony was nearly

over, entered the vault with all thoſe mockeries of woe which he ſo well knew how to aſſume, when it ſerved his purpoſe.

But theſe counterfeit griefs were changed to the moſt undiſſembled paroxyſms of rage, the moment he beheld Caroline Stuart ſupported by Henry Fitzorton; and without reflecting on time, place or circumſtance, and before his conſtitutional fear had checked his conſtitutional impetuoſity, he aſſeverated, in a voice that might affright the echoes of the vault, "Perdition on you both! again! and in ſight of your mother's very grave! And thou, infamous accomplice," added he, turning to Arthur, "to permit ſuch things! at ſuch a ſeaſon! But it belongs to your trade."—Arthur, though the gentleſt of human beings, brooked not the ſmalleſt irreverence either againſt his character or office;—"In performing the commiſſion of my immortal God," ſaid he, "I am not to be interrupted by mortal man!"

"Sir,"

"Sir," ſaid Henry, delivering the ſinking Caroline to her father, "I am here, you are to be informed, as the ſubſtitute of your ſon, and at his ſtrong injunction: why this ſacred duty was to be performed by proxy you beſt can tell."—"I knew not of it," ſaid Caroline, recovering; but Sir Guiſe, with unmanly violence, thruſt her from him, and ſhe would have fallen again, had not Arthur ſprung to receive her, exclaiming, "I, madam, will be your protector, in a place and in a cauſe like this, againſt a thouſand cruel fathers! —Sacrilegious! bring not your deſtructive paſſions into the tombs of your family! let thoſe at leaſt be privileged. You know not how ſoon you may be numbered with their cold inhabitants; and your unprepared ſoul ſummoned to anſwer for the outrage here committed."

Hearing this, the aſſembly, and more eſpecially his own domeſticks, began to be tumultuous. The words "unnatural father! vile huſband! and tyrant maſter!" were heard from one to the other, till they

ſpread beyond the vault, even to the chapel, which was now filled with the multitude. The prieſts and the people, who had attended the funeral, ruſhed in diſorder out of the cemetry. The indignation became general, and every one ſeeming glad of an opportunity to expreſs their ſenſe of the unhallowed violence which Sir Guiſe had perpetrated, and their deteſtation of his character, gave a looſe to their ſenſations in a way that would probably have put an end to the iniquities of the object of their fury, had not Caroline implored the aſſiſtance of Denniſon, Henry and Arthur, to ſave her father; and, almoſt at the hazard of their own lives, they conducted him home amidſt the groans and hiſſes of the populace.

CHAPTER XL.

A FATHER'S SHAME.

CAROLINE, meanwhile, was left by Henry and Father Arthur in the charge of two ſervants, with directions to lead her to the chapel-houſe; but no perſuaſions nor any conſiderations of herſelf, could prevent her from following her father, whoſe life ſhe thought in danger. The reſt of the ſervants were aſſiſting to lead her to the abbey, and ſuch of the populace as her pitiable ſituation had attracted round her, took her in their arms, and, placing her in a chair which they brought from the chapel-houſe, they carried her in triumph upon their ſhoulders, huzzaing and calling down bleſſings upon her at every ſtep.— In this condition ſhe was met by Father Arthur and Henry; commanding the ſtill clamorous people to keep ſilence, to venerate the dead, and ſo far reſpect the living, as not to commit farther violence. Henry reinforced theſe arguments with all his elo-

quence, and declared, he would defend the father of Caroline Stuart, on ſuch an occaſion, with the laſt drop of his blood. "Is he ſafe?" exclaimed Caroline. Being ſatisfied on which head, ſhe ſo movingly aſſiſted Henry and Arthur by a ſpeech which might almoſt have touched Sir Guiſe himſelf, that the multitude, after crying out, as with one voice, "Long live miſs Caroline!—bleſſed be miſs Caroline!"—quietly and reſpectfully departed to their habitations.

At the abbey gate, Henry, alſo, took his leave, for which he was repaid by a look from Caroline that almoſt atoned for the loſs of her ſociety. He took Father Arthur aſide to requeſt that modern patriarch would remain at the abbey until the break of day, leſt any freſh tumult ſhould happen, which his authority might quell; obſerving, that there were particular reaſons why he himſelf could not tarry; adding at the ſame time, that he would one day probably be made acquainted with them. Poſſibly Arthur had been ſtruck

with ſome of the expreſſions, that had dropped from Caroline in the foregoing ſcene, but he had not an atom of impertinent curioſity in his diſpoſition;—as he, therefore, bade him farewell, he aſſured him if he thought it too early in the morning to repair to the caſtle, and would accept of a Franciſcan's coarſe and humble, but clean and wholeſome bed, the chapel-houſe was at his devotion: "And this, Sir," ſaid he, preſenting him with a ſmall key, "will open a cloſet that holds a cordial worth being taken off in a bumper, even to the health of the good young lady whoſe cauſe you have ſo nobly defended."

To the abhorrent poiſon brooding in the mind of Sir Guiſe Stuart, were now added his diſgraces at the chapel-houſe. He collected the ſcattered points of his growing antipathies, and the focus preſented to him Henry, Arthur, and Caroline in a conſpiracy.—The country was up in arms againſt him—the multitude had made him their mark.—Execrations had been poured in torrents in the middle of the night—

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and that, the night of the funeral of his wife, whom his tyranny, they ſaid, had brought to an untimely end.—From that epoch, we are to date the laſt poſſible exceſs of his inveteracy to the whole houſe of Fitzorton, and to the whole of his own family, except Charles, for whom he ſtill felt, as it were againſt his will, an unaccountable predilection.

Henry, on the other hand, had made ſome diſcoveries at the funeral ſcene, melancholy as it was, which returned upon his mind the beams of hope. He ſaw he was ſtill in poſſeſſion of Caroline's love, and that her concealment of that love did not proceed from her own caprice, or from any diſpleaſure againſt him, but from her father, who, he concluded, had impoſed on her a cruel obedience. This diſcovery, endeared the daughter in the degree that it rendered the parent odious. Yet his anger abated whenever he reflected that its object was the father of his deareſt friend, and of his beloved miſtreſs: and the parting look which Caroline beſtowed, although it gleamed

gleamed on him—only from the light of funeral tapers, afforded him a ray far more chearing than had the noon-tide ſun, when he trod that very path, on the day that Caroline diſmiſſed him from her preſence.

The turret clock ſtruck three in the morning, as Henry arrived at the caſtle, where he had the misfortune to hear that Olivia was much worſe than when he left home. It ſeems that the diſorder which had prevailed at the funeral, had communicated part of its confuſion to the caſtle, from whence two of the ſervants ran to ſee the ceremony. The name of one of theſe was George Trewe, commonly called, by way of characteriſing his worth, True George, who went out of pure good will to his young maſter; the other ſervant, out of curioſity, having never ſeen the catholick ceremonies of burial. The ſervices of George had been divided between John and Henry: for ſome time paſt he had wholly attached himſelf to the latter, and had been on all occaſions the ſhadow of his maſter; though in his nightly

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expeditions, lefs feen than that fhadow. Whenever he feared that his attendings would not be acceptable, or that they would appear obtrufive, impertinent, or unneceffary, he was, from motives yet undivulged, ftill his invifible affociate; and when his prefence might be ufeful, he would appear in the twinkling of an eye, and impute fuch appearance to accident. Thus, George was among the moft active in hooting Sir Guife, while Henry feemed to declare againft him; and the moft vigorous in his defence the moment he heard his mafter affert, that he would protect the father of Caroline, even with his blood. George too, was the centre pillar of fupport to Caroline, when fhe was carried in the chair, which he fixed upon his head, while the reft affifted only with their hands and fhoulders; and thus was George hid from his mafter, while he rendered him the moft welcome fervice in the world. George alfo it was, who, after the affray, made fome fhort cuts through the wood at full fpeed, that he might reach home be-

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fore his maſter, and have, what the poor fellow uſed to call the " little comforts" prepared; more particularly ſince Henry was become, as George aptly enough called him, " a night walker;" in which character, though George always took care to keep aloof, he was, when it was either bitter weather, or he ſuſpected any danger, his maſter's inviſible companion; but ſimply to do him ſervice, and to take care of him without the leaſt deſire to entrap his ſecrets. Thus was the honeſt adherent privy to Henry's moſt retired ſoliloquies, and was as well acquainted with his maſter's paſſion as he was himſelf, and from juſt as unqueſtionable an authority,—namely, from his maſter's confeſſions, uttered by his own lips; from all which the poor fellow had drawn an inference, which led him one dark night to kneel down in a wood, they were then haunting, even on the wet ground,—being at a conſiderable diſtance from his maſter,—and ſwore, " he would he might be d****d if ever he left him alone again, if he could help it, after eight o'clock."

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The other ſervant, however, had been before-hand with George, having retreated from the chapel as ſoon as the mob began to be riotous : for though this man had much curioſity he had little enterpriſe, and, on the moſt diſtant proſpect of danger, always took the worſt that could happen for granted, anticipating murder before a blow was ſtruck. Upon this ſyſtem, therefore, concluding that when the rabble began to huſtle the baronet, there would be much havock, he made the beſt of his way home, and told Olivia and John, whom he firſt encountered, not only what he ſaw, but what he did not ſee, and what in fact did not happen, except in the wild regions of his own terrified fancy.

True George no ſooner heard this, than he execrated his fellow-ſervant, both for his babbling and cowardice; and upon being further informed that Olivia had been carried to her chamber in *hyſtericals*, as the fellow called them ;—" I'll tell you what," ſaid George, " that being the caſe, if you ſtay until my young maſter, who is ſafe, God

God blefs him, comes in, and he is juft behind; it will be worfe for you, that's all: I fhould not wonder if he was to murder you on the fpot; and if it was not for the law I would do it myfelf!"—As he pronounced thefe words, a rap was given at the door, when the affrighted author of all this mifchief, already half-killed with George's menace, difappeared.

Upon the entrance, however, of Henry, it was neceffary for him to be apprized of what had happened, and accordingly George was beginning to recapitulate, when John Fitzorton came down, and fuperior to enquiry, infifted that nothing ought to fatisfy Olivia of his having efcaped with life, but his going up ftairs that inftant to convince her of it in perfon. This he accordingly did, but had fome difficulty in perfuading her he was not hurt; he affured her that the fellow, in his fears, had overcharged the facts, which were no more than that mifs Stuart, overborne by her diftrefs, was fupported, mutually, between himfelf and Father Arthur; that Sir Guife Stuart having

having exaſperated the rabble, it was partly to prevent worſe conſequences that he had remained as his abſent friend's repreſentative.

John, in his deciſive way, pronounced it proper to defend even an infamous individual againſt the oppreſſions of many, though he owned it would have been for the good of ſociety had they devoured him.—"Yes," ſaid Olivia, "and how much more generous is the conduct of your brother, when you conſider who that individual is—an hated enemy."—"It is all very fine and heroic," ſaid Olivia's father;—"but, in the mean time, theſe great exploits of one ſort or another happen ſo often, that our young hero generally contrives to diſturb us once or twice a week in the middle of the night; and after he has kept us from our beds, and frightened us out of our wits, the buſineſs finiſhes with a hiſtory, in which the ſaid hero has acted ſo diſtinguiſhed a part, that the more he terrifies us, the more we find we ought to return him our thanks. I wiſh," added the old gen-

gentleman, "we could confine him to one great action a month, or that, at leaſt, he would take day-light for his magnanimous exploits, as theſe nocturnal marches and counter-marches by no means ſuit either with my age or my Olivia's youth; to prevent any new adventure befalling our aimable Quixote, let us to bed."

The propoſal was univerſally agreed to. —"George," ſaid Henry, as he was undreſſing, "I find that bungling blockhead has made a pretty piece of work about nothing; but as no harm has ariſen from it, and as the poor devil hardly knew what he ſaid, I think we may as well let him live this time: yet it was a tremendous ſcene; you are a ſpirited fellow, and had *you* been preſent, I do not know what would have been the conſequence."

"Me, your honour!" ſaid George, not to be thrown from his guard, having more than once ſuffered thereby, "what ſhould I do there, unleſs your honour was in danger, and my poor ſervices could do any thing for you? but as to my fellow-ſervant,

vant, ſince 'tis your honour's pleaſure, I'll not be hanged for him yet, which I certainly ſhall be one day or another; for to tell your honour the truth, I do not think it right to let a fellow's head remain upon his ſhoulders any longer than he can keep the tongue in it from blabbing:—if a fellow can't keep a ſecret, why there's an end of a fellow—there's an end of him, your honour."—Henry ſmiled, and deſired True George to betake himſelf to reſt.

CHAPTER XLI.

A LOVER'S DELIRIUM.

OLIVIA ſoon recovered from her indiſpoſition; the more ſhe ſaw of her beloved Henry, the greater was her tenderneſs. "There are points in his diſpoſition," ſhe would ſay, "which appear to make him ſometimes prefer ſolitude even to my ſociety; and with theſe, I am apt to quarrel, but this is ſelfiſh. To that ſolitude I owe the effuſions of his genius. He engages

gages in ſcenes which make me tremble for his ſafety, it is true, but that proceeds from the weakneſs of my fears, or the ſtrength of my affection; on his return to me, I always find him good, affectionate, and kind; and have reaſon to congratulate myſelf. Even the abſence which I ſo often mourn, produces from his bounteous heart ſome relief to the unfortunate, or a more perfect joy to the happy. It is true, there are times when the melancholy power comes upon him, even in our ſociety; the ſight of ſorrow, a tear, a ſigh, a thought that but leads to ſadneſs will ſtrike the nerve to which his affections tremble.—But ought this to be brought againſt him, when I have ſeen him ruſh from the ſociety moſt precious to him,—from friends, brothers, parents, and his Olivia,—leſt he ſhould communicate ſadneſs?"

With ſuch arguments would ſhe ſoothe her ſpirits, and account for the wanderings of Henry. It was after a ſoliloquy of this kind, when ſhe had, in like manner, ſettled the moſt irreconcileable parts of his behaviour

viour to his credit, and her content,—what cannot the tender love of woman effect!—that he entered the room where ſhe had been reaſoning. It was the morning after theſe nocturnal diſturbances, and when his vivacity had been called forth by the lucky conſtruction which had been given to the late events, that he joined Olivia, with whom imagination had been playing as many vagaries, and in this mutual deluſion, they deceived each other without deſigning, or, it is probable, being conſcious of it; for every word they ſaid, was at firſt, the mere effect of good ſpirits on both ſides, created by what to them appeared good proſpects; though they were never farther than at this moment from looking on the ſame objects, in the ſame point of view.

"I have been chiding myſelf, Henry," ſaid Olivia.

"Then you have been very wicked," he anſwered; "for therein you accuſed the innocent; but as I believe it is your firſt fault, I think I muſt intercede with my good

good friend, Father Arthur, to give you absolution."

"The first fault! by no means!" replied Olivia; "I have done it a thousand times; but if it be a sin, you are generally the cause of it, and ought, of course, to share the punishment; and yet methinks, could it be proved that you partook the guilt, I would exempt you from the penalty, and suffer for us both."

"That would not be fair," said Henry; "but how have I been the cause pray?"

"Why you are too good, and I am always finding fault with you for it," replied she.

"I rather think the faults are mine, the goodness yours," cried Henry. "Indeed, I think you so good, that I have feared, until very lately, there could not be found a mortal man who truly deserved you; and yet, I am almost bold enough to say, such a man, I think, I have found too, aye and you know him."

"I am sure I do," says she, smiling. "O, that a woman could be found

worthy of Henry Fitzorton!" exclaimed Olivia.

"And yet there is," interrupted Henry, with ardour, "ſuch a woman to be found worthy of a man, were he ten thouſand times—were he as much my ſuperior in every thing—as ſhe is herſelf."

"Then it is impoſſible," anſwered Olivia, colouring highly, "that I ſhould have the ſmalleſt acquaintance with *this* paragon."

"And yet—and yet, ſhe is not in any one grace or virtue ſuperior to Olivia; but for the man who can merit an alliance with this all-accompliſhed! I verily believe, after all, he is yet to be born."

"Poh, you are in love with her, and are beſides a poet, you know," anſwered Olivia, bluſhing a deeper carnation; "for my part, I really think there are fifty men deſerve a much better woman than Olivia."

"And yet there is but one man in the creation I would give my conſent ſhe ſhould marry," returned Henry.

"Would to heaven!" ſaid Olivia, "that

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your choice may make you as happy as it will your Olivia."

Here the very names of Caroline and Charles, and all the hiſtory thereunto belonging, were hovering on the edge of Henry's lips, when Olivia ſent them back again to the receſſes of his boſom, by anſwering with an ardour, that matched his own, giving her hand at the ſame time;—"Ah, you know that it is ſo—you know, that poor and humble as are my pretenſions, inferior in all things, but in affection, to that one being you allude to, I have long been, and ſhall be for ever devoted to him! The terrors that invade me, when I behold a gloom upon his brow, a tear upon his cheek, or hear a ſigh burſt from his boſom, and all the griefs I experience in his abſence, ariſe only from the certainty, that were I more near to him in the virtues which firſt made me love him, all would be well. I tell my heart, he then could not look ſad, or ſigh or weep, becauſe my power over him would be no leſs than his over Olivia, whoſe worſt evils flee at his

 bidding,

bidding, and vaniſh even at his ſight; inaſmuch, that as his abſence is her ſickneſs, ſo is his preſence her recovery. Yes, Henry! thoſe perfections in me would render you as happy in the company of Olivia, as ſhe ever is in yours; and it is this inequality on my part, that is the ſource of thoſe reproaches, with which I load myſelf, until, in my anger, I utter a prayer that you were leſs amiable, or I more worthy."

Olivia poured forth theſe confeſſions of her heart,—confeſſions which ſeemed to be called for,—into the boſom of a youth with whom, one eventful year excepted, ſhe had been bred, educated, and taught by duty and inclination, judgment and paſſion—by all ſhe loved, and all ſhe honoured, to appreciate;—and of whoſe love ſhe never for a moment doubted, though the reader is aware, he never once mentioned that word to her. She delivered herſelf with a rapidity and unreſerved fervour, accompanied by endearments, at once ſo delicate and kind, which their long intimacy, and the ſuppoſed near approach of

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that day which was to unite them in the holieſt of all human ties, ſtrictly warranted, that Henry muſt have had a very different heart from that he carried in his boſom, if he had not been ſomewhat more than paſſive to ſo much innocence, beauty, and tenderneſs, cheriſhing a ſweet deluſion, upon which depended the hope not only of *her* happineſs, but that of the authors of both their beings, and, indeed, every individual of both their families.

"Sweet Olivia!" exclaimed he, gazing earneſtly upon her, "I do not deſerve this,—and yet from my inmoſt ſoul I wiſh——"

He continued his gaze, and while he was ſo doing, ſoftly approaching her, a tear dropped on her lovely face, which ſhe no ſooner felt, than lifting her eyes towards him, as if to read the hiſtory of his countenance, ſhe ſaid, in accents no words can paint,—"There are tears to relieve, and expreſs an heart overburthened with its joy, are there not, my Henry? I hope theſe are ſuch: I do not weep myſelf; yet when have I been ſo happy!"

"Long be you ſo," replied Henry; "and, Oh! that it was decreed as long for me to make you ſo!"

"We are very young," anſwered Olivia, with inexpreſſible ſimplicity; "and may reckon upon many years like this bleſt moment! I am ſure you will never be leſs beloved!"

Henry was labouring to ſmother a heart-ſick ſigh; he gently kiſſed off the tears he had let fall on her cheek, when both their fathers came in and ſurpriſed them: "Proofs roſe on proofs, and ſtill the laſt ſeemed ſtrongeſt!"

CHAPTER XLII.

AGONIES AND TRANSPORTS OF SENSIBILITY.

THROUGH a glaſs door, ſhaded only by a curtain of ſlight ſilk that was eaſily drawn aſide, the happy parents had ſtood ſome moments delighting themſelves with the view, and on their entrance could only ſay,

"Deareſt

" Deareſt, deareſt children, we have been concerting meaſures for the happineſs of Henry and Olivia !" and they both wept.

Lady Fitzorton entered, and was made happy by the relation of what had ſo ſenſibly affected the reſt of the party.

In the mean time, John Fitzorton, leaving the company who had walked into the garden, betook himſelf to his chamber, his uſual ſanctuary under any ſudden preſſure of thought, or of emotion: but he ſoon rallied and rejoined his friends, then catching Henry's arm he ſaid, as he turned with him into a private path, " You have often hinted your friend Charles regretted that his military ſtation was inconvenient to him. It muſt be more ſo ſince the death of his mother; as his ſiſter is now wholly in the power of her father. I have thought about this, and had it often in recollection ſince my return from the campaign, to refer myſelf to you for thoſe particulars which your intimacy with the family might have afforded."—Henry trembled—" But you have of late been ſo ſhut up within

yourſelf, that I have not had an opportunity to mention either that, or ſome intelligence out of the family reſpecting yourſelf."—Henry's agitation increaſed.—"I underſtand," continued John, "that intereſt is ſtill paying for the money which Charles borrowed of an uſurer to purchaſe his lieutenancy."

Henry was in the ſtate of him who is told of his reprieve with the halter about his neck. "Suppoſe," reſumed John, "your friend were to diſpoſe of that commiſſion, and apply the profits of it in diſcharge of that loan, and then come into our regiment, where by the loſs of a brave youth who fell fighting by my ſide, I can introduce him without coſt."

The generous reader muſt himſelf ſupply the ſenſations of Henry on this propoſal.

"But," obſerved John, "though there are no impediments in the way of the gift itſelf, there are ſome in that of giving. The recent meeting I have had with his ſcoundrel father makes it impoſſible for me

to

to be ſeen in a tranſaction of this nature. It would appear like parading a ſervice which I knew the brave youth would not receive. What I would not accept I will not offer. But you are the friend of his heart. He cannot, or ought not, to have any heſitation with you; for if there be yet any of this ſort of *ſentimentizing* between you, both are yet to learn the truth of friendſhip. As a brother I demand your acceptance of the powers with which theſe papers will inveſt you. There is a blank ſpace, and your heart, without my inſtruction, will tell you how to fill it up."

John perceived Henry getting into what he was wont to call his enthuſiaſticks. The emotion of his full heart had for ſome time coloured his cheek, his eye flamed with more than poetick luſtre, and the ecſtacy was juſt burſting from his tremulous lips, when his tongue refuſed to give it voice, and, after the ſtruggle of a moment, he fell upon his brother's neck and wept.

John was by no means unmoved. Even to his firm ſoul it had been a trying day.

 James,

James, who had been abſent during the above diſcourſe, now entered. "My dear Henry," ſaid John, "we live in a world in which it is our duty to correct rather than to indulge ſenſibility. Your affections, my Henry, are too general."—Here John preſſed his brother's hand to his boſom.—"They magnify objects beyond what they can bear; they give to actions which are, in truth, no more than the reſults of common honeſty, and juſt thinking, an importance which they are by no means entitled to. Brother, I love you, but you often grieve, and ſometimes diſpleaſe me. Few of the greateſt events in human life would juſtify the feeling excited in your mind by the moſt trifling; and this exceſs of ſenſation confounds the diſtinction which ſhould be made betwixt what is ſmall and what is great. There is, my brother, in the conſtruction of this poor panting heart of yours enough of irritation to make up half a dozen feveriſh young ladies, who reckon an hectic of the heart amongſt their charms. In them it is uſually affectation;

in

in you, I know, it is nature, and therefore to be deplored."

"Alas, my brother!" exclaimed Henry, ſtriking his boſom, "I rather ſtand in need of conſolation than cenſure,—of your pity, than your rigour, or your ridicule."

"Deareſt Henry," anſwered John, much moved, "let not what I found, long ſince, a ſcorpion in my boſom, be a viper in yours. Fable has not given to the ungrateful ſnake ſo fell a tooth as the ſmiling miſchief which you cheriſh in your boſom, and call ſenſibility. Let me conjure you then, to circumſcribe its power, and if it is one of the tyrants in your blood, conſider it like the 'lurking principle of death,' which, one of your poets has told us, is mixed up in our frame, ſooner or later to conſume what it feeds on: or, if you love the deluſion of ſtill thinking it your friend,—for, alas! like all favourites, it has but too many powers of recommending itſelf, teach it only to glow at what is really great or good: and let it not prompt you to the injuſtice of conferring on the mean, the honours that belong only to the illuſtrious.—I do not chide, my

dear Henry, I only counſel," added John; "but if you think I have too much rebuked the power, which I ſee is the favourite denizen of this boſom,"—laying his hand on Henry's heart,—"if you think I have been too hard on this ſenſibility, let me atone for my cenſure by a juſt applauſe."

James, being ſummoned on buſineſs, had withdrawn.

"One object there is on which this ſenſibility may employ all its blandiſhments: When it ſeduces my brother from himſelf—when it makes him forget that a parent's and a brother's life is intruſted to his charge; when it

'Waſtes its ſweetneſs on the deſert air,'—

you ſee I have caught the ſpirit of your muſe, though, by the bye, ſhe ſometimes leads you into errors;—then I muſt quarrel with it;—but, when it prompts your bounding heart to pay to Olivia what is ſo abundantly her due;—when it urges you to do homage to the beauty, innocence and love, ſhe has in ſtore for you, I am reconciled

conciled to its full dominion over you; I blame not even the tears it makes you ſhed, nor the enthuſiaſm it excites, even if it draws from my own eyes, or exacts from my own feelings, ſuch ſympathies as give me the ſuffering without the recompence, the wound without the balm; though, whatever may be the wounds of John, they can never want a balm while Henry and Olivia are happy!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

CONFESSIONS OF A GENEROUS SOUL.

JOHN, in the courſe of his philippic againſt ſenſibility, exhibited many ſigns that, while he was reaſoning as a philoſopher, he felt as a man. James had only followed the even tenor of his reflections.

Towards the cloſe, John appeared to be ſeized with one of thoſe ſudden and ſtrong contentions within, which ſometimes ſecluded him from his family and friends. More than one dire cauſe contributed to this;

this; but the greateſt was impenetrably cloſed from every eye but that which ſearches the heart.

An ebullition of this kind in the mind of John Fitzorton, was frequently attended by that bilious miſery which ſo often turns the whole maſs of blood; and in him would produce a confinement of ſome days, during which he would admit no witneſs of its effects; nor, till the confinement was paſt, would he reunite himſelf to ſociety. Then he would come forth, an obvious victim of the ravage that had been made. The extremes of pleaſure or of pain would produce more or leſs this boſom contention. The ſtudy of his whole life had been to manage himſelf in theſe exceſſes, to which he was but too conſcious his diſpoſition was prone; and when, as was in ſome inſtances the caſe, his beſt endeavours failed, he fervently offered up a prayer that to human efforts might be added divine aids for the government of his nature.

His

His reſentment was rarely implacable: for although no earthly power could make him return his hand to any from whom he had withdrawn it, on conviction of unprincipled offences; it was not unuſual with him to ſerve thoſe, on impulſes of general compaſſion, with whom he would never more aſſociate. His immitigability was indeed chiefly confined to himſelf. It was there principally he inverted the ordinary laws of ſelf-love, by ſeverely, though ſilently, becoming a ſelf accuſer; and ſome ſenſations which accompanied the delivery of the ſentiments that concluded his addreſs to his brother, returned on him ſuch accuſation.

Henry, on the contrary, though on the firſt receipt of an injury, he was tumultuous, vehement, and ſudden, if, after thoſe impulſes had ſubſided, any palliative preſented itſelf, by which the cauſe of his wrongs, even by a little ſtrain upon candour, could be imputable to misfortune, to the preſſure of hurrying events, or indeed to any thing but cold and meditated

 baſeneſs,

baſeneſs, he would forget how far the effect had operated againſt his own feeling or intereſt, and be the firſt to ſeek accommodation.

So touched was the ingenuous youth by the affecting and affectionate *manner*, as well as *matter*, of his brother, in this admonitory diſcourſe, that though he was unable to ſpeak from a certain mixture of awe, reſpect, and attention, he looked all that could denote at once a grateful and an afflicted heart. But collecting himſelf a little towards the concluſion, and when John had, by degrees opened his arms to give to his laſt words the impreſſion of an embrace.—" O my brother!" exclaimed Henry, " that you could deſcend into this overburthened heart!—that you could ſee, or that I could tell you—that it were permitted me—that I dare to diſcloſe"—

" Dare!" cried John, reſiſting a ſudden indiſpoſition that had nearly ſunk him at Henry's feet:—" Does that heart then contain any thing it dares not unfold? A Fitzorton can fear nothing—but himſelf;"—

ſelf !"—The death-like paleneſs which had the moment before uſurped the cheeks of John, now ſeemed tranſpoſed to thoſe of Henry.—" That expreſſion would almoſt juſtify me, in the belief of a tale which has been poured into my ear," reſumed John, " reſpecting Henry Fitzorton; a tale of ſo incredible a nature, that I renounced it as a vile aſperſion; nay, concluding it ſuch, I ſtopt its progreſs."

" A tale !" queſtioned his brother, with confuſion too mighty to be concealed, " ſurely I have a right to know the accuſation, and the accuſer !"

" The accuſer," replied John, throwing his examining eye over Henry, " is the terror of the perſon accuſed."

" That terror is of John's creation. It is not the firſt time we have ſeen innocence abaſhed, and misfortune appalled in the preſence of John Fitzorton :"—here the roſes began to reviſit Henry's cheek. —" Yet have I beheld even John himſelf ſtruggling with emotions which, to any one unacquainted with the purity of his heart,

heart, might have ſubjected him to the cenſure of men who, like himſelf, are diſpoſed to judge hardly.—I have ſeen him wrought into agony, his very ſpirit on the rack; he has thrown into every countenance, and ſunk into every boſom, a ſadneſs like his own. In the midſt of this painful ſympathy he has left friends, brothers, parents, without explanation: has reſiſted the ſoftneſs of one, the authority of another, and the wiſhes of all; and when has *his* ſilence been imputed to guilt? when have the effects been attributed to his not daring to diſcover the cauſe?"

It is, indeed, true, that it would be impoſſible for an aggreſſor, or for any perſon he conceived to be ſuch, to ſtand in the preſence of John Fitzorton, without feeling more terror in his ſilence than in the moſt rending climaxes of Henry's indignation. It was an awful dumbneſs, which diſmayed the very ſoul, and when, at the end of this tremendous pauſe, he at laſt ſpoke, the ſentence which he paſt upon the action, was bitter, and commonly

brief;

brief; as if the ſudden death of the offender were to be pronounced and executed in the ſame moment. Yet, how ſhall we find cenſure for emotions which, whether excited againſt others or himſelf, were emotions of a mind zealous in the cauſe of honeſty? and if we admit that the paroxyſms which attended them were the vices of his blood, we muſt allow alſo that they aroſe from the virtues of his heart.

Sometimes however, before he had done ſpeaking to Henry, the agitated, yet then empaſſioned John, began to droop: his ingenuous ſoul felt the force of his brother's remarks: and, ſelf-condemned, he advanced to Henry, from whom he had receded, and preſenting his hand, he ſaid, with a voice humbled even to penitence, "It is but juſt I ſhould offer what perhaps it is no leſs right you ſhould refuſe: Henry forgive me! I have thrown your tender diſpoſition into confuſion, and puniſhed you for my own fault. My nature and my habits are ſtern. I will

try

try to mend them. How came ſo harſh a being to be a brother of yours, my Henry? I have my ſoftneſs too—ſometimes: I have not always been the knotted oak; I have even been weaker than the bending reed; and it is indeed true that you have never chid me for it; nor have you even ſuppoſed, as I did, that my want of confidence has been the want of honour: I am unworthy of your pardon!"

As he was withdrawing his hand, Henry caught it with all the eagerneſs of fraternal love, and preſſed it to his lips; then ſpreading his arms he exclaimed, "O my dear, dear brother! you are worthy of every thing: this—ah, how long has it been deſired!—this is the moment—this is the ſituation,"—drawing John ſtill more cloſely to his embrace—"when I am to convince my beloved John, if I have not dared to"—

At this criſis, Olivia came into the garden. Powerful, indeed, muſt be the pencil that could colour her feelings at this joyful ſight! While the brothers were

yet enfolded in each others arms, ſhe ſoftly encircled her own around them both; and with accents that might, indeed, melt

"Contending nations into brotherhood,"

She reiterated the expreſſion which had before ended an affectionate ſtrife*, "Bleſs! bleſs ye together!"

"I proteſt," ſaid Olivia, "I had forgot my errand, which was to inform you dinner waited, but this richer banquet for my heart had obliviated every other."—"To dinner then with what appetite we may," ſaid John ſmiling, but not without an half ſuppreſſed ſigh, as he reſigned the hand of Olivia to Henry. "Nay," cried Olivia, placing herſelf between the brothers, and preſenting a hand to each, "are we not all united? I muſt," added ſhe, playfully, "on this happy occaſion go in all the ſtate of my proud heart—ſupported by the family arms!" In this manner

* On the celebration of her birth-day.

they

they entered the caſtle. But as True George opened the dining hall door: "We muſt ſeparate here," obſerved John, "only two can go in at a time, and thoſe muſt of courſe be Henry and Olivia." As ſoon as they had entered, John ordered George to cloſe the door; then traverſing with hurried ſteps the antichamber, George took it for granted that the "older young 'ſquire," as he ſometimes called him, was more agreeably employed than if he were ſeated at a good dinner, ſo letting himſelf into the dining room to wait at table, left him with as little noiſe as poſſible, whiſpering, "Huſh! huſh; hang the door, how it creaks!"

At length, having made his exit, the honeſt domeſtick hinted to the family, that his honour, the philoſopher, was ſuddenly taken with one of his *coggibunduſſes*, and he could ſee that his honour thought as little about dinner as if there was no ſuch amuſement as eating and drinking in the world.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE EXCELLENCE AND DEFECT OF THE MODERN NOVELS.

JOHN's ſoliloquy was brief and pointed. —"It muſt be done—and immediately. I am a fool to my own heart, and a knave to my brother's. I have been in miſery. Deciſion is happineſs. I am decided."

Each of theſe ſhort ſentences was ſpoken walking, and each was performed in a long ſtride. The word "deciſion" brought him to the dining room door, which he opened with the firmneſs and energy of a man, who, after various debate of thought, and irreſolution of conduct, had determined.

In the evening, the family as was cuſtomary, aſſembled in the library, where they frequently paſſed ſome hours in literary converſations. John had recovered the hue of his countenance; and even his ſarcaſtick ſportiveneſs returned, to the general joy of the company; and, clouded as

had

had been the day, it was an evening of family happineſs, in which even Henry was beguiled from the immediate memory of his diſappointments and perplexities.

In order to force his mind from other thoughts, which he felt would diſqualify him for that calm ſeparation on which he was reſolved, John again opened his unexhauſted artillery upon what he called the monſtroſities of Poeſy and Romance; in reply to all which Sir Armine, taking part with Henry, pleaſantly exclaimed, "Your proſe-loving brother has again aſſailed us unprovokedly, my Harry; it is now a common cauſe. I, like you, have *romanced* and *poetiſed*, and am invaded; and depend upon it, under the auſpices of inſulted Phœbus, we ſhall, when we have more time upon our hands, rout this furious Drawcanſir, 'Thou nature art our goddeſs.'—

"Inſpired by her," interpoſed Henry, taking up the theme as he always did, zealouſly, "I inſiſt that a play, a poem, or romance, though ſo inceſſantly the objects

of my brother's ridicule, poſſibly of his envy and deſpair, I maintain that either of theſe may become as uſeful to the intereſts of virtue as the moſt laboured diſquiſition in the proud circle of philoſophy; and on this ſubject I muſt own, I have long wiſhed to obtain my dear Father's more decided and circumſtantial opinion; becauſe, whether diſcouraging or favourable to my own, I ſhould hear it with great deference; conſcious it would be founded on true judgment, tempered by candour, which I take to be true criticiſm."

"Whoſoever propoſes to make amuſement the miniſter of inſtruction," reſumed Sir Armine, "is like a mariner between two tremendous rocks. On this ſide he hath to encounter the pomps of learning, on that the affectations of vanity: both theſe pretending, with equal contumacy, to hold romances and novels in ſcorn. But there are few compoſitions which are not better than the converſation of that ignorance which affects wiſdom, or of that learning

which despises knowledge, through whatever channels it may flow. Nevertheless, I have observed these sagacious persons are so wonderfully gifted, as to anticipate every thing a book of this kind contains on the first glimpse of the title, and not, forsooth, having time to waste on trifles, throw aside the said book; which appears to me just as fair a proceeding as if a physiognomist, pretending to see fool or knave written on a man's features, should look in his face, express his suspicion, and knock him down."

"Alas, my father! there is no justice in this," cried James; "while the being that speculates, like the being which is speculated upon, remains human, many of his first-sight judgments must be questionable, whether he be a physiognomist of men or of books. The countenances of both are sometimes, indeed, copious indexes, but sometimes mere title-pages, insomuch, that the most profound observer must often be at fault: a very promising title, may, like a prepossessing, set of features,

tures, cover a great deal of nonſenſe or of villainy, in the ſame manner as a crooked noſe, bleared eyes, jutting lips, and ſhagged brows, curved againſt all rule for ſenſe and honeſty, may be the rugged caſkets to conceal a direct underſtanding, an upright heart, and principles in the ſymmetry of perfect moral beauty."

"But my ſon James," rejoined Sir Armine, "forgets that vanity has her votaries, both amongſt the wiſe as well as the fair, the learned as the unlearned. As the former of theſe would bluſh to be caught with a book they wiſh the world to believe below their underſtanding, the latter often contrive to be ſeen at ſtudies above their capacity; and it is pleaſant enough to obſerve, both of them labouring to maintain a character, which neither can reaſonably hope to eſtabliſh."

"It is well known," continued James, "I am a determined foe to all extremes, and that becauſe almoſt every good—moral

and natural,—lies between them. Too wiſe, too fooliſh, too erudite, too illiterate, too dull, too brilliant, are exceſſes I equally tremble at. I never ceaſe to wiſh my dear brothers had more of my unaſpiring, and yet neither unprofitable nor unhappy, mediocrity in all things."

"In poeſy, brother! O Phœbus!"—ejaculated Henry, firing—"You, ſurely, are not an advocate for intellectual mediocrity—Save, ſave me from that, O Power of inſpiration!"

"A middling philoſopher, a middling lawyer, are not characters much to be commended either," cried John.

"Yet," ſaid Sir Armine, ſmiling on all his ſons, "let me not be miſunderſtood.—If by ſilly books are meant thoſe miſerable and meagre productions, which reſemble every thing more than the humanity they profeſs to paint, I will as ſtrongly diſpute the ſovereignty of my contempt for ſuch as John Fitzorton; but I ſhould as ſoon think of confounding the extremes of light and darkneſs in the phyſical and natural, as

in

in the intellectual world. For which reason, methinks, ſome mark of ſeparation ſhould be made betwixt the authors who correctly imitate the works of nature, and thoſe who produce monſtrous compoſitions with which nature hath nothing to do: compoſitions that are run up with the ſpeed, but not with the ingenuity of the ſpider's web,—as eaſily ſwept away, and as ſoon forgotten. But far apart, and honourably diſtinct from theſe, are the accurate delineations of very many romance writers of the laſt and preſent age, whoſe reputation ſhall endure with that of any hiſtorian, philoſopher, or poet. Indeed, if, 'the proper ſtudy of mankind be man,' the author who beſt deſcribes the human character and conduct, unfolds moſt ſkilfully the various mazes of life, and enters moſt minutely into that which produces, and that which deſtroys, domeſtick happineſs, is the moſt uſeful author. Abſtract reaſonings, philoſophical diſcuſſions, ſuch as John cultivates, and the ſublimer ſoarings of the muſe, which are ſo dear to

Henry, have genuine charms only for a few, and of theſe, ſome affect to admire what they neither can reliſh nor underſtand; but the hiſtorian of private life, for to that name he ſhould aſpire, paints ſcenes and characters which are familiar to every man. To ſay the truth, what are the domeſtick annals of the whole world, my ſons, but ſo many hiſtories of this kind, abounding with character, incident, and adventure? Every day affords matter for a new chapter, and every year ſwells the work into another, merry or melancholy, volume; or rather a miſcellany compounded of both. The reſt of the ſubject, which will be found very productive, muſt ſtand over."

John preſſed his brother Henry's hand, while he aſſured him, that with whatever aſperity he might, ſometimes, have attacked his art, it had never been with deſign to deſpoil him of his laurel, or depreciate its value; but to ſeparate it from the florid weeds with which it is too often ſurrounded, and to make it, in-

deed,

deed, an immortal plant worthy to grace his brows.

The triumph which Henry had before begun to feel from his father's ſanction, was compleated in his brother's generous confeſſions.

But John Fitzorton had yet another theme to adjuſt before the company withdrew, and the parting moment being at hand, he announced his intention of joining his regiment on the morrow. "There is, indeed," ſaid he, "an indecency, an ingratitude in being appointed to fill the place of the ever-lamented Laſcelles, without endeavouring, at leaſt, to make myſelf acceptable to the ſoldiers, who have loſt the commander they ſo juſtly honoured and loved.

"We will here take leave, therefore, of one another, wiſhing, by way of toaſt to this brimmer of claret,—filling his glaſs,—that whatever alterations may take place, during my abſence, in the caſtle of Fitzorton,"—looking earneſtly at Olivia and Henry—"may be for the better!"

After the company had quitted the ſupper-room, John accompanied Henry up ſtairs, when taking his hand with great cordiality, he addreſſed him thus:—"My brother, farewell!—cultivate your family; it loves you; cultivate your genius; cultivate"—-he heſitated,—turned pale, attempted ſpeech, but failed.—"We will correſpond" ſaid he, faintly, and preſſing his brother's hand while his own ſhook; "yes we will communicate by letter. I leave you in the faireſt proſpect of unbounded happineſs,—I ſee how you are beloved, honoured, adored, and am ſtill ſhocked to think I have ever admitted a doubt"—Saying this, he embraced Henry; repeated his farewell, and expreſſing a wiſh to be alone, he gently cloſed Henry's apartment, went haſtily into his own, and locked the door.

Thus was Henry deprived of another opportunity to unfold himſelf; for he knew it would be a vain attempt to deſire an audience with John, after he had expreſſed a wiſh of privacy.

It

It was, however, a ſevere diſappointment. He had even anchored his beſt hopes upon it; and though he had been dexterouſly ſeduced into his ſecond ſubject, the inſtant he reverted to himſelf he had anticipated the certainty of converſing with John as a point of infinite importance, and yet his anticipation was a mixture of fear and hope. But when the moment ſo anxiouſly expected, and ſo hard to be attained,—on account of John's frequent abſence from the caſtle—arrived, his brother's emotions, and reſolute tones, deſtroyed his hope. "It is plain," ſaid he, "he knows my cruel ſecret, and is diſpleaſed, but, unwilling to part in altercation, has tried by every way to avoid a rupture, and will diſcloſe himſelf by letter."

After paſſing ſeveral uneaſy hours, he compoſed himſelf a little, on reflecting, that he ſhould ſtill have the opportunity of which he had thus again been deprived, by catching John in the morning before he ſet off. But here again he was prevented

by, perhaps, the laſt impediment he would have thought could have been placed in his way. He fell into a doze which continued to hold him faſt locked in the arms of Morpheus, not only till the hour was paſt at which John had riſen, but till True George tapt at his chamber door, to acquaint him that the family waited breakfaſt for him. Yes, reader, wearied with turning his arguments, and oppreſſed with the vigour with which he ſupplied the ideal fire, againſt whatever artillery he ſuppoſed John would bring into the field, in the inſtant that our luckleſs youth had brought his forces to the higheſt degree of order and perfection, ſleep overtook him, and the day was loſt.

CHAPTER XLV.

ANOTHER FAMILY SECRET: BEING THE HISTORY OF JOHN FITZORTON.

JOHN Fitzorton's journey was not pleaſant. He rode with unuſual haſte, as if to leave behind him the reflection that ſpurred him on. But what human power can outſtrip the velocity of thought, or eſcape the mind that gives it wing? Alas! he travelled with more than one arrow in his boſom. "And wherefore," ſaid he, "this ſcrutiny into Henry Fitzorton's myſteries? have I none of my own? and what if his ſhould proceed from an unfortunate paſſion? Is there no allowance to be made for involuntary feeling? and ſhall not ſecret contention, and ſacred reſerve in ſuch an affliction, be accounted to him as virtue? yet into Henry's apology am I not inſinuating my own? Futile ſophiſtry!"—

John broke from his ſubject, and, changing the attack, levelled his artillery againſt

one whom he moſt dreaded to offend. This ſelf-diſpleaſure was an anathema, fixing the immitigable curſe. "For Henry," ſaid he, "there are palliatives, for me, there can be none. Fool! ideot! hypocrite! and and have I forgot my warning?"

Amidſt ſuch rebuking thoughts, he rode on, till, midway betwixt Fitzorton caſtle and the place of his deſtination, he came within view of a village ſpire. He approached it in ſilence, and on arriving at a little inn near the church, he put up his horſe. While he is there indulging meditation, we will relate, briefly, the hiſtory of his youth.

The elder brother derived from his ſeniority only an earlier acquaintance with ſorrow. Not an eaſy or a vulgar prize, he yielded up his heart, in his ſixteenth year, to a lady, who, within a few weeks of the appointed nuptials, diſpoſed of herſelf to a more adulating and gaudy lover. In the firſt effuſion of reſentment, he predicted the deſtiny which afterwards befel her; and on her being diſgraced and abandoned, he paid

paid her a viſit ſolely to expreſs his joy, that the aims of ambition and of falſehood had been diſappointed. But while he was about to clothe this ſentiment in language that might aggravate its import, news arrived that the pretended huſband was dead, and that the imaginary widow had no lawful claim even to the name of the man who had enſnared her. John came to reprove; but the victim being already overwhelmed, he departed, obſerving, that the prophecy was fulfilled ſomewhat ſooner than he expected!

Scarcely had he cloſed the door ere his heart urged him to knock for re-admittance. In ſhame, diſappointment, and deſpair, Maria ſunk on the floor the moment he re-entered. Unable to meet his eye, ſhe covered her face with her hands, and withdrew to her chamber. He remained ſome time, contending with himſelf, and again left the houſe. "She is in ruins," ſaid John, "ſhe has ſurvived my affections, and I bluſh at the ſimplicity that truſted them to her poſſeſſion; but ſhall

the

the ſimplicity of a child influence the conduct of a man? I will ſee her no more, becauſe I could not behold her without reproach. But ſhe has lived in affluence, and ſhall not die in poverty.

The day ſucceeding theſe reflections, he addreſſed the following letter to Sir Armine Fitzorton.

'My Father and Friend!'

'You would have indulged me, ſome 'years ſince, in a childiſh inclination: 'luckily it was not gratified. Treachery 'interpoſed, and was, in that inſtance, the 'means of ſaving me: the traitor has, 'therefore, to a certain extent, a claim 'upon my gratitude. But the traitor now 'is herſelf betrayed! ſhe is without a 'ſingle ſhilling to continue the life, which, 'though it has loſt all uſe and luſtre, 'ſhould be preſerved, till ſhe can have 'better hope in death. Of that fortune, 'therefore, which you generouſly deſigned 'me, I will employ ſuch a ſum as may be 'neceſſary to the decent purpoſes of a wo-

'man's life, for the ſpace of one year; a 'year of experiment. The reſt I intreat 'may remain with my parental benefactor. 'I am honoured in ſubſcribing myſelf,

'Sir,

'Your grateful ſon,

'JOHN FITZORTON.'

The infidelity of Maria was connected with no common artifice. Within one month of the appointed mock nuptials, ſhe urged her new lover to a ſecreſy, founded, ſhe ſaid, on the fear of Mr. John Fitzorton, who tormented her with his addreſſes. Her lover was pleaſed at the propoſal of ſecreſy; for it favoured his own plan of deception. But ſhe was ſometimes embarraſſed how to divide herſelf between them. John, ſhe knew, was not a man to be trifled with; nor her earl, for ſuch he was, a man to trifle till his point was gained. Some objections mingled in the lady's family hiſtory; and ſhe would not have herſelf been the elected of John, had not a well-imitated ſentiment of tender ſorrow,

ſorrow, terminating in as well-feigned a ſickneſs, found their way to his generous heart. Indeed, to imagine we have wounded, and to be told we can heal, are, in themſelves, deciſive motives with a noble mind. He ſo long believed himſelf beloved, that in the end, if he did not love, his affections were intereſted to reſtore the happineſs which he ſuppoſed he had deſtroyed, and he generouſly reſolved to complete the felicity which he believed it was in his power to beſtow, by an immediate viſit.

Maria reſided with an aunt, who having arrived at the age of cards, and living in a card-loving pariſh, was a very proper aunt for a niece addicted to lovers. The good old lady happened to be at a party in the neighbourhood, when John called at her houſe to communicate the joyful news he had in ſtore.

His rap at the door denoted that ſomething animated his heart. Mrs. Betty having ſurveyed the announcer from a chamber window, which had for ſome time been

been the obſervatory, ran down in a violent hurry, and anſwered the queſtion by firſt practiſing the celebrated poetical ſignal:

> "Juſt three ſoft ſtrokes upon the *parlour* door,"

and then let in John Fitzorton. John always frowned on denials, and laughed at apologies; ſo made his way directly into the parlour. Maria was alone, but in ſtrange diſorder. This he imputed to the ſight of the man ſhe loved.—"I have often read about roſy terrors, and my little brother Harry is much addicted to them. The boy is a ſuſceptible liſper, and I uſed to ſmile at him; but ſince my own heart has been a flutterer alſo, I only ſmile when he is in his roſy terrors, pat the lad on the cheek, or ſtroke his head. But," continued John, ſeeing Maria's tremblings augment, "I now come with an aſſurance that the period deſtined to make us bleſt, will bleſs my parents alſo." John expreſſed himſelf in a voice that beſpoke the honeſt feeling of his

heart,

heart, and preſſed Maria to a boſom which might truly be called the manſion of ſincerity.

While ſhe was yet in his embrace, a movement of feet, as if in fear to tread, and a ſound of voices, as if afraid of betraying a ſecret, were heard in the paſſage. Preſently a blundering againſt the door, was followed by an oath extorted by pain; " Damnation! I have broke my ſhins!" exclaimed ſome one. Maria's terrors encreaſed. John, rather from ſurpriſe than ſuſpicion, ran to the door.—" For heaven's ſake! dear John, do not attempt to—to" —and ſhe placed her back againſt the door, that the blunderers might have time to get off. While John liſtened, another voice yet louder than the former, roared out, " By G—d! unleſs we get a candle we may grope about this d—d entry all night, and ſtill not find the curſed key."—" Nay, but there's miſchief at work!" cried John.

He opened the door, all was in darkneſs; he took one of the parlour candles, and then ſaw huddled into a corner two terror-

ſtricken

ſtricken beings; their faces folded in their coats. John caught hold of both, and declared he would immediately have them carried to his father, Sir Armine, if they did not reſtore whatever they might have taken out of the houſe. How condeſcending is guilt!—Inſtead of replying to this ſtern accuſation, the gentle earl, who now unhooded, milkily ſaid, "You are miſtaken, young gentleman. I have the honour to viſit in this family." Maria had ventured to the parlour door. "Theſe perſons boaſt the honour of being on terms of intimacy here," ſaid John, indignantly dragging his captives. "Good heaven!" exclaimed Maria, "Is it poſſible *you* ſhould be here, Mr. Durfey! I am afraid, in the confuſion this pair of *true lovyers*"—pointing to the ſervants—"were thrown into, by your preſence, that they were ſuffering you to go away without ſpeaking to us. I am ſure my aunt would never forgive me if you were to leave us in that manner."

John did not interrupt their converſation, which, though a little disjointed, he

looked

looked upon as entirely doing away the charge of petty larceny, ſo he let go his hold.

"This," reſumed Maria, "is the poor ſick gentleman who is down here for the recovery of his health, and ſometimes drops in to paſs an hour at picquet with my good aunt; and this is Mr. Thomas his valet, who is an humble ſervant, you muſt know, of our Betty's." Mr. Thomas, unveiling, bowed affirmatively. Mrs. Betty declared with rapture ſhe had found the key. "How came it loſt?" queſtioned John. While the ingenious handmaid was looking about for an anſwer, Mr. Durfey very ſmoothly expreſſed his ſincere acknowledgements for the young lady's goodneſs; but he had merely called *en paſſant*, ſeeing the ſervants ſweet-hearting at the door; and though he was labouring under a cough which would have made it impoſſible for him to ſtop for more than a few moments, he could not be guilty of even the appearance of neglect, where he had received ſo many civilities. He begged his

his beſt compliments to the young lady's good aunt, and heartily wiſhed them a good night.

There was one circumſtance in this ſtory, which very rarely happened to any of the narratives of this right honourable hiſtorian: one expreſſion in it was *true*. He actually was under the influence of ſo ſevere a cough, that the imperious neceſſity of ſuppreſſing it, while he remained where his miſtreſs ſuddenly conveyed him, had almoſt ſuffocated him; and after he had tried the different modes of ſtifling this traitor to all family ſecrets, by holding in his breath, and cramming his cambrick handkerchief into his mouth, he was obliged to lift up the ſaſh of the cloſet window, and take a lover's leap into the garden, making his way from thence into the kitchen, where he found Betty and his valet warmly engaged in another *tête-à-tête*. "Bleſs me! there's ſomebody coming!" ſaid the fair abigail.—"Only my lord," replied the valet, with the familiarity which is ſanctioned by aſſociated vice,—

advancing

advancing with eaſy bows as he ſpoke; "Mrs. Betty and your humble ſervant, my lord, having agreed to make a match of it, we were ſettling a few preliminaries."—"Huſh! this is no time for ſport: don't make any noiſe; ſhew a light to the door ſoftly."—The man and maſter ſtole on tiptoe along the paſſage, attended by the light-footed Mrs. Betty; but as the latter perceived the key was not in the lock, ſhe ſtooped down to ſee if it had not fallen, when the wind that iſſued from under the door, blew out the light, and brought on the ſeveral events with which the reader has been made acquainted.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE REVENGE OF JOHN FITZORTON.

"MARIA," ſaid John, "I dare ſay your aunt's motive for receiving that Mr. Durfey, is pity; your's, of courſe, is obedience: but, take my word for it, he will ſome way abuſe the goodneſs of you both." "O no," replied Maria, "he's a poor ſick gentleman!"

"But why," queſtioned John, "did he try to tuck himſelf out of ſight? a creeper into holes and corners is always a worthleſs fellow!"

"Conſider his ſtate of health, his nerves; he ſeems in a deep decline; were it not for this idea I ſhould never forgive him for interrupting the delightful tidings brought by my deareſt, deareſt John."

Maria contrived, in ſomething leſs than ſixty moments, to make even her half-ſuſpicious lover forget every thing but what ſhe thought it convenient he ſhould remember. She had now only to clear

away the little roughneſſes which the adventure had left behind it. To effect this, ſhe called into action all her witchery, and lo! every contraction was taken from the brow of her lover. Never did Mrs. Betty herſelf with her beſt ſmoothing iron bring her own apron or handkerchief, after romping with Mr. Thomas, more dexterouſly out of its tell-tale rumples.

But this was *not* to be a very lucky hour either to the miſtreſs or maid. In the midſt of theſe ſweetly oblivious moments, while the hand of Maria was tenderly preſſing that of John; while her cheeks, and even her lips, invited and received the conciliatory kiſs, Mrs. Betty's well-known turn of the key, made it proper for the lovers to reſume their ſeats; in doing which, Maria was ſo overcome with joy that it was neceſſary, ſhe thought, to apply a handkerchief to her lovely, but unweeping eyes: and while ſhe held it up to her fair face, John perceived a letter which had been whiſked out of her pocket, in a very diſcompoſed ſtate. As it lay on the

the floor, John was ſtruck by the words, "Fear not tall boy John, that great oaf ſhall be beat hollow." The reſt of the ſentence was loſt in the folds.

John trembled as if he had been viſited by a palſy in every joint. His teeth partly gnaſhed, and partly chattered: he felt a tear in his eye, which burning rage ſoon dried up; then he reſumed his ſeat, and while the letter was in his hand, the good aunt came in. John attempted in vain to ſpeak: "Good heaven!" ſaid the old lady, "what is the matter! The changes in the countenance of the abigail were only leſs rueful than in thoſe of her young lady. The innocent aunt took out her ſmelling-bottle, ordered Betty to get a cordial from the corner cupboard, and ſpoke with ſincere ſympathy.

John roſe, and ſeemed aſhamed to have been wrought on. "I fancy, madam, I have the cure of my diſorder, here in my hand: your niece dropt this letter in the ſtate you now ſee it, and I perceived my own name moſt villainouſly coupled with

words that demand inſtant explanation; but, as the letter is not my property, I can only throw it within reach of the perſon to whom it is addreſſed, thus!—If ſhe is diſpoſed to do herſelf, her correſpondent, and the man to whom ſhe is contracted, juſtice, ſhe will account for all this."

John again ſat down.

"You muſt have miſtaken names," ſaid the aunt: "yours could never be joined to any diſreſpectful words. Child, read the letter directly, and there will be an end of it."

"There will ſo," ſaid John.

"Only my couſin Charlotte, who is always ſaying ſome fooliſh nonſenſe or other for ſport againſt Mr. Fitzorton, to vex me; you know her way, aunt."

"Then your niece, madam, can have no difficulty in reading it," ſaid John.

"But that I cannot do, you ill-tempered creature! Charlotte would never forgive me if ſhe thought I ſhewed her letters: beſides you ought to know, I had rather die,

die, than hear a ſyllable againſt you ſeriouſly."

Here ſhe felt again for her handkerchief, and probably found it, but fearing, perhaps, another accident, did not draw it forth.

"I require only to look at the direction of that letter," exclaimed John.

"Hold up the letter and let Mr. Fitzorton ſee the ſuperſcription inſtantly, niece."

"There then, you croſs thing!" holding it at arm's-length, and affecting to pout.

"Nearer," ſaid John; "in your hand it is in perpetual motion; confide it to mine."

"Aye, aye, let Mr. Fitzorton have it," ſaid the aunt; "you have been at girl and boy's play long enough."

Maria ſhook with apprehenſion, and as a laſt effort to prevent the dreaded diſcovery, ſhe made a feint as if to ſnuff the candles that John might ſee better, when diſguiſing her terror in a trick, to which ſhe gave the air of a frolick, ſhe extin-

guiſhed one light, and blew out another; and then burſting into a well-imitated laugh, hurried towards the door, and would, doubtleſs, have taken good care of the letter, had not John arreſted her progreſs.—"Nay then, inſtead of girl's play, I perceive your niece, madam, has been, and ſtill is, very hard at work. I muſt now inſiſt on having the matter inſtantly cleared up."

"I muſt inſiſt on it too," rejoined the good aunt. She went blindfold to the bell, and rang it violently.

The young lady, now at her laſt ſtake, firſt ſqueezing the letter into a twiſt, began to thruſt it between her ruby lips, and would have incontinently torn it to pieces with her ivory teeth, had not John wrenched it from her, ſwearing "that were the author before him, attempting, as Maria had attempted to elude his inſpection, he would purſue its contents to the centre of his heart."

In this ſituation of the parties the conſcious Mrs. Betty entered. It was a deſpe-

rate

rate moment. Maria, coming up cloſe to John, whiſpered him to beware—he might repent it—ſhe would adviſe him not to proceed too far—he did not perhaps know of what ſhe was capable.

Diſdaining reply, John ſecured the key of the parlour door, and ordering the terrified abigail to light the candles, he took one of thoſe "flaming inſtruments" to the poor aunt, and with a voice and manner that, in every tone and movement, ſeparated the innocent from the criminals, obſerved, "that although he felt himſelf warranted, conſidering the predicament in which he ſtood, to read a letter wherein the writer had dared to inſult him, he had ſuch faith in what he had heard and ſeen of *her* integrity, that if ſhe aſſured him it was written by a woman, he would require a far leſs important ſacrifice than he ſhould otherwiſe exact."

Maria now ſat herſelf down in a kind of ſorrowful deſperation. Yet ſhe conceived a gleam of hope, and but a gleam, that her aunt would make a little free with her uſual

probity, to ſave a niece whoſe fame and fortune ſhe might thereby clear up or caſt into utter darkneſs.

"Sir," ſaid the aged lady, "though it would be with poignant miſery I ſhould find my niece capable of what you have laid to her charge, depend on my veracity!"

All hopes were over with Maria, ſo the faithful Betty walked off. The aunt put on her ſpectacles, and rubbed them with the corner of her handkerchief that ſhe might ſee the clearer. John held the candle. She opened the fatal ſcroll, from which, on an impulſe of honour, John turned away his head.—A pauſe!—The paper ſoon began to tremble in the aunt's hand. John darted a look at Maria. "Pleaſe, madam, to make report."—A ſecond and yet longer pauſe.—The good old lady exhibited every mark of conſternation; her tears dropped on her ſpectacles.—"Alas! alas! there was left only this girl's ſuppoſed truth and goodneſs to ſuſtain me, Sir; the hope and confidence of many years is overturned in a moment; yet,

yet, to bring her to this, ſurely, ſurely ſome heinous arts muſt have been practiſed againſt my niece, by this Mr. Durfey."

"Durfey!" ejaculated John:—"Yes, Sir, Mr. Durfey, whom I ſuppoſed a poor, inoffenſive, ſick gentleman."

"Madam," interpoſed John, "I releaſe you from the trouble of any further peruſal; and I grieve that a neceſſary explanation has cauſed you pain. The juſtice of poſſeſſing myſelf of that letter you will not refuſe me, ſince the honour of both our families is involved in it."

She ſuffered him to draw the letter out of her hand, and, bowing reſpectfully to *her*, he left the houſe.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE WEAKNESS OF THE STRONG.

AT the date of theſe events, John was on a viſit to Mr. Clare, who then reſided, part of the year, at a ſeat about three miles from Maria's village.

He walked to his friend's houſe ſo intenſely thinking on what had paſt, that the ſpace was in a manner annihilated. On his arrival he reſiſted all intreaty, and avoided all explanation, though his diſordered appearance excited inquiry. The inſtant he reached his chamber, he opened Durfey's letter, and read as follows:

'Deareſt, as lovlieſt!

'All things are nearly arranged. Apart-
'ments ſecured for us in town. My
'chaplain will meet to bleſs us on the way.
'Fear not tall-boy John; that great oaf
'ſhall be beat hollow. Such a treaſure as
'Maria is not fit to be truſted to his
'keeping. Family affairs make it prudent

'to

'to keep our nuptials, titles, &c. for a 'season, concealed. What has grandeur to 'do with happiness? I recollect to-morrow 'afternoon is aunt's card-club night; the 'poor sick gentleman, therefore, will con-'secrate the hours to his charming nurse; 'until when, adieu!

'The doating, devoted,

'DURFEY.'

To attempt any description of the state into which John was thrown by this letter would be presumption. The emotion, which, by its magnitude, suspended every power of speech, is too mighty for written language. Not words only, but the capacity of action was, for some time, so intirely taken away, that he sat fixed in his chair, pale, motionless, and cold; as if some new and peculiar fate had hardened his body into a petrefaction; and when the power of changing posture, in any degree, returned, he caught at the bell, but wanting force to ring, he sunk on the bed, where

he remained ſome hours, weaker than infancy or age.

He recovered, only to find himſelf the make-game of an intriguing girl, the ridicule of an unprincipled impoſtor, and, on all hands, circumvented in his generous deſigns, in return for an unpractiſed and unſullied heart, that had ſoftened to pity, ere it glowed with love. He meditated terrible puniſhments. They went not to the honourable death, but extended to the aſſaſſination of the impoſtor. "His blood," ſaid John, "ſhall anſwer it! openly, and in the face of day, will I maſſacre him. It will be a deed of philanthropy, and of public good to put an end to his crimes.—Yet—ſhall the ſon of Armine Fitzorton turn common ſtabber? No, I muſt ſubmit to the cuſtom of the times, and give to a rogue the chance of killing an honeſt man."

All his ſenſations pointed to Durfey; not a thought deviated to his aſſociate. Maria was not more defended from his vengeance by her ſex, than by the con-

tempt which had ſunk her in his eſteem. She now wanted importance in his mind, to entitle her to the dignity of his anger: —ſhe had fallen from the eminence of his higheſt confidence to the profoundeſt inſignificance. But the audacity of a man, who had dared to mingle the name of Fitzorton with the ribald ſallies of a gallant, was an object of correction, and he roſe before the ſun to chaſtiſe him. But the hurry of his ſpirits and of his reflections, ſtill intercepted his purpoſe. In raiſing himſelf from the bed, and in getting down ſtairs, his ſtrength was nearly exhauſted; and while he was attempting to remove the faſtnings of the outward door, every corporeal power again forſook him, and he dropped ſenſeleſs on the threſhold. Such was the condition in which he was, at length, found by the ſervants, whom he had alarmed, and who conveyed him back to his chamber. This debility was followed by an acceſſion of fever ſo intenſe, that life became at hazard. In a ſhort interval, however, that the diſorder afforded, he thus wrote to Durfey.

"Villain!—This appellation explains itſelf, when you learn that I am in poſſeſſion of your infamous letter to Maria. I will be prepared to receive you here any time before the cloſe of the preſent day, to ſettle with you for the liberties you have taken with

"JOHN FITZORTON."

The writer's malady was not abated by having penned this letter; yet the thought of having written it, and of having found a truſty domeſtick, no leſs than True George, then a boy, but a boy of honour, ſeemed to give him ſpirits. His friends looked upon theſe as omens of returning health. His doctor imputed them to the operation of well-prepared medicines; John to the real cauſe, the hope of exterminating from ſociety one of its monſters. He gave out that he expected to ſee a perſon, with whom he had the greateſt wiſh in the world to converſe; and he forced a ſmile, which led Mr. and Mrs. Clare to ſuppoſe he had planned a *tête-à-tête* with his Maria, more eſpecially

eſpecially when it was found that little George had taken the road to the village where the young lady reſided.

" As that is the caſe, friend John," ſaid the good Mr. Clare, adopting the idea, " you will want all your force to ſay pretty things to the damſel of your affections, and muſt be kept quiet until ſhe comes." John believing it might facilitate his deſign, did not diſcourage this notion; and Mr. Clare gave orders to admit into Mr. Fitz-orton's room, whoever might require converſation with him.

John remembered to have ſeen a pair of piſtols hang in the adjoining room. Theſe he conveyed into his apartment, unperceived, and placed them behind his pillow; then made ſome ſlight alterations in his dreſs, and waited the arrival of the counterfeit Durfey with extreme ſolicitude. The hour of his fever returned; yet he now thought himſelf better; miſtaking the fire raging in his veins for the genial exhilaration of renovating health. At length, a rap was given at his chamber-door, and

he ſprang to open it, aſſured of ſeeing little George and Maria's paramour. The former, always faithful, appeared to his wiſh; but the latter, profiting by Maria's information of what had paſſed at her aunt's, after he had made his well-bred bow, had taken himſelf off at the dead of the night following, in company with his "charming nurſe," who had condeſcended, like himſelf, to reſign all bridal pomps for the comfortable obſcurity of a ſecure elopement. She was attended only by the ductile Betty, who, in the ſame hour, at the ſame place, became, by virtue of ties almoſt as ſacred, the eſpouſed of Mr. Thomas, who had given away his hand yet oftener than his lord.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

JUVENILE HISTORY OF JOHN FITZORTON.

TO this early piece of treachery, we are to attribute ſome of thoſe rigorous judgments and ſuſpicions which gave force to the natural acumen of ſome parts of John Fitzorton's diſpoſition; and, indeed, it was treachery of the worſt kind, and falling out at the worſt period of life. The mere diſappointment paſſed away; nay, he ſoon looked on it as an eſcape from the temerity of boyiſh purſuits; and it had the effect of leading his thoughts to profound and manly contemplations, to the ſoul-expanding ſtudy of philoſophy and reaſon, of nature and of God. The heavy ſenſe of the deception, however, entered his boſom, and engraved there an image of perfidy that had taken the form of beauty and love: a fiend in the angel ſemblance of Maria. "But out of evil there cometh good," cried John—"I am armed for ever againſt woman!"

There

There would, indeed, have been ſome danger that a mind like his, working under ſuch an influence, might have brooded over its ſuſpicions until they grew into miſanthropy. But the example of a benevolent family continually before his eyes, whenever he viſited Fitzorton caſtle, kept alive the principles of human kindneſs in his heart; and ſerved as a counterpoiſe to the unſocial check it had thus received in early life; even as the flower whoſe bud the chilling breath of one inauſpicious morn had begun to nip, is recovered by the ſun: another ungenial gale might have blighted it for ever; but a ſucceſſion of vivifying beams reſtores it; and though it may long ſhew the injury which it received in the ſeaſon of the tender leaf, it ſhall ſtill be numbered amongſt the proudeſt blooms of the garden. Notwithſtanding this, John felt it neceſſary ſoon after to add the active to contemplative employments; and on a mixed principle of policy and paſſion, he became a ſoldier.

And now, reader, we are haſtening to the point from which we ſet out. The juvenile hiſtory of John is drawing to a cloſe. We have ſeen his young heart, under the influences of pity and gratitude, and of a love grafted only upon theſe. We have obſerved him under the emotions of reſentment, rage, and deſpair. The ſupplementary parts are few, but potent.

Maria's aunt fell a martyr to grief ſoon after theſe tranſactions; and Maria herſelf ſurvived her deceiver but eighteen months, during which ſhe remained the object of John's bounty, ſolely for the reaſons aſſigned in his letter; nor did ſhe know the ſource, even in her expiring moments.

In thoſe moments, however, ſhe earneſtly ſupplicated an interview with John. Whether he would have reſiſted the appeal, had it reached him in time, cannot be known, for the petitioner died the evening of the day on which the requeſt was made.

"It is too late," ſaid the perſon who brought the news, "the ſoul of Maria

is

is now ſoliciting the pardon of its Maker!"

"May he grant it!" ſighed John.—"Is ſhe in her grave?" added he. On being told that ſhe would not be buried until the night following, he obſerved, "that his vow renounced the ſight of her, only while living;" he then ordered his horſe.

Maria's remains had been removed out of the hearſe into the houſe of her late aunt, when John reached the memorable village.

It was amongſt the wiſhes of the deceaſed, that her body might be ſuffered to remain awhile in the apartment where ſhe had won, and loſt, the heart of John Fitzorton. And this indulgence was, by the intereſt of the perſon whom John had employed, and who brought the tidings of her deceaſe, procured of the tenant who then occupied it. And thus he found himſelf once more with Maria, in the very room where ſhe gained his affection, and incurred its forfeit.

"Is

"Is the coffin ſoldered?" demanded John. Before any one could reply, he had felt the lid, and found it faſt. "Better as it is, perhaps," added he.—"Sir," ſaid the principal attendant of the hearſe, "if it is your pleaſure it can eaſily be opened. —Indeed, I had before my doubts, whether all is quite as it ſhould be within; ſo I have only tacked down the head-piece."

John making no reply, and his anxious looks being taken for aſſent, the lid was lifted up, and the dead Maria preſented to his view. The hearſe-driver aſked, whether that which the lady had got in her right hand ought to go into the ground with her?—"To my thoughts, Sir," continued the man, "it is too good to be thrown into the earth; but it ſeems his honour, your Father, would have it ſo, becauſe the lady, when dying, deſired it:—but dying people have ſtrange fancies."

John, looking into the coffin, perceived within the graſp of Maria's clay-cold hand, a miniature of himſelf, given to her in the

day

day of his confidence. But while he was yet ſurveying the miniature, another object aſſailed his attention: a female, whoſe face was covered with a veil, and who appeared to be the chief mourner, now unfolded a ſable covering that wrapped up an infant, which, being lifted to the height of the coffin was bade, by the perſon holding it, to take, ſince the coffin was again uncloſed, another look of her poor mother. John ſtarted. The unconſcious babe put in its little arms, and began to play with the flowers that were ſtrewed over the corpſe. —"Whoſe is this?" queſtioned John.— "Maria's," anſwered a trembling voice.— "And that villain Durfey's?" ſaid John. —"Alas, yes, Sir!" replied the female.— "No matter," ſaid John, taking it gently in his arms: "It has a likeneſs of the mother,—ſuch as once I ſaw her—And is this the only fruit of—" "It is, your honour."—"Poor little wretch!" ſaid John, returning it to the woman, whom he found to be the very ſervant who had been ſo active in the plot againſt him but

but was no ſooner recognized than ſhe dropped her double-folded veil, and ſhrunk from the humid eyes of John.

The hearſe-driver put his hand into the coffin, and would have taken out the miniature from the dead hand.—" Let it alone, fellow !" ſaid John, ſternly. Then looking in Maria's face, " Thou haſt not deſerved it," ſaid he, " but 'twas a gift; and the dead ſhall not be plundered."

He inſiſted on the ſoldering being done in his preſence; and had his eye on the coffin until it was depoſited in the grave. As he moved ſlowly from the reliques, he ſaid, " Alas! after all, misfortune is not the leſs to be pitied, when reſulting from vices by which the offender is robbed of every energy, human and divine, to bear it with fortitude. Ill-fated Maria! I pity thee."

From this æra, whenever John felt his ideas opening to the poſſibility of a ſecond attachment, againſt which the deception he met with in the firſt had, in a manner, caſed his heart in armour, he would recal to his

 me-

memory the danger he had eſcaped; and in order to bring that deception more immediately under his eye, he would betake himſelf to the burial-place of the firſt faithleſs object of his confidence.—Even from the tomb of the traitoreſs ſeemed to proceed the counſels of a friend. Amidſt the ſtillneſs of night, and the ſhadows of the moon, he would gaze on the graſſy hillock that covered the remains of Maria, till a voice—a warning voice,—appeared to riſe from the ground, conjuring him to beware.

And this warning was more than uſually neceſſary at the time he ſtopped at the gate of the church-yard, where we recently left him. "True," ſaid he, advancing to the grave, "I live not in reſentment of the dead, but ſomething ſtronger than my own reaſon, or experience, admoniſhes me to ſtand, once more, guarded againſt the living!—O, had ever falſehood, predetermined falſehood, a form more beautiful, a voice more ſweet than thine, Maria? I truſted thee! wert thou not my faith, my hope, my con-

conviction?—Could malice, envy, hatred, —could ought but thyself have destroyed thyself?—Yet even in the moment that I thought thy faith most entire, was it not most broken? Continue then to harden my heart! and peace to thy shade! But, alas!" continued he, after a pause of several minutes, "what defence can the memory of a thousand false and wicked beings, afford against the virtues of one innocent woman? and that I have found one good being, even of womankind, it would be wilful blindness against the light of heaven to deny. Shall he who constantly sees and feels the sun's blessed beams, dispute his power? shall he hesitate to confess it is a spark from God, because he has been once misled by a shining vapour of the air, or an exhalation of the earth?—Adieu, Maria!—thy grave can no longer avail! farewell to it for ever!—Yes, unless thou canst teach me to forget worth, and beauty, and fraternal love, and filial honour, —all that is due to myself, my family, and my God,—farewell to the spot that encloses

closes thy dust! But if thou canst teach me to remember all these, yet subdue the rebel powers that agonize my soul with vain wishes, that the affections of the lovely being who winds round my heart, had fallen to the lot of John, instead of Henry Fitzorton!—then will I consider this thy place of burial, as the spot most holy, most beneficient,—then will I repair to it with more than pilgrim veneration, and it shall be my sanctuary."

In a word, John found out a truth important to the heart—that the affection produced only by gratitude, or pity, is not love.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XLIX.

REFLECTIONS OF A LOVER DECEIVED.

BEFORE any tender ſentiment had been ſtrongly excited by Henry in the breaſt of Olivia Clare, John had witneſſed her attractive powers. He ſaw that no being within her reach could ſuffer without calling forth her compaſſion, which, during his own ſickneſs and ſorrows, while at her Father's houſe, was diſplayed in ſo many artleſs ways, that while her own perſon was yet the care of a nurſery, ſhe was able herſelf to nurſe the wounded mind.

She would ſometimes ſteal into John's chamber, during his illneſs, and try all her powers of conſolation. Then knowing little of the pleaſures, and leſs of the pains of love, ſhe had heard they made the heart more happy, or more miſerable, than any other joy or grief in the world; and ſhe had collected enough from the family below, to underſtand that the poor youth

above, ſuffered from the falſehood of one he had loved. Hence, whenever the little Olivia detected, in ſpite of his efforts, a tear guſh from his eye, ſhe would aſcend his knee, to wipe, or to kiſs it away. John often noticed this, when he overlooked every thing elſe. It was little leſs than a cherub's pity, and came in a moment, when whatever had been long enough in the world to have been polluted by its practices, would have rendered it ſuſpected. —"Yes," would he frequently, and ſighingly ſay, while Olivia attempted to ſoothe him,—"yes, ſweet girl, at preſent it is nature. Ah, how do I lament the impoſſibility of thy remaining thus genuine!" Gazing earneſtly, he proceeded,—"Once that very being who has thus baſely deceived me, was ſuch as thou art. O, if thou art to grow up, like her, into frauds, and to array thyſelf in faſcinations, manifold and mighty enough to cover the worſt deceit; 'twere better, far better, for thyſelf, thy parents, all whom thou art to enſnare, and for thy own ſoul, that thou

wert

wert taken to heaven, while thy purity may render thee acceptable."

In the midſt of theſe expreſſions he would careſs her on his lap, or fold her in his arms, and, as he raiſed her to his lips, would exclaim, with an emotion, and emphaſis that ſtartled her, "Surely it is not decreed for thee to be another traitor!—another Maria!"—The child aſſured him ſhe ſhould always be a very good girl, and very truly love thoſe who loved her.

At the end of John's ſickneſs, which was not until the end of his long viſit, he ſaw little more of Olivia for ſome time, except when he repaired to the grave of Maria, or when the Clare family were down at the manor houſe, in the pariſh of Fitzorton; yet, even in theſe caſual glances, the unfolding graces of her mind and perſon, ſerved as antidotes to the poiſon which the conduct of Maria had infuſed into his heart.

But on the Clares' coming after the death of Olivia's mother to reſide in London, John had yet more opportunity to ſee the

beauty of Olivia's form and heart yet in their bud, and more keenly to deplore what, he ſuppoſed, muſt happen to the bloſſom.

He would vigilantly watch every action, as if he expected to diſcover ſome female artifice beginning to ſpring. The innocent creature ſeemed to ſuppoſe an idea of this kind was working in his mind; for one day after John had been examining her looks, then employed on ſomething that appeared much to intereſt her, ſhe exclaimed,—

"You may look! but I mean juſt what I ſay, Mr. John, and am a very good little girl ſtill, I aſſure you; am I not, papa? ſo pray don't fix your eyes on me ſo; for though I mean, as I told you at Clare-place, to be a good girl as long as I live, you make me afraid of you, Mr. John!"

This was, indeed, the truth; perhaps, for John, a fatal truth: ſince it is certain there grew up in this lovely girl's mind towards him a certain awe, which, though it aroſe from a veneration for his virtues, and a gratitude for his guardian care,

was the moſt unfavourable ſentiment for his latent affection, that he could poſſibly inſpire.

Hence, although John had exactly the opportunities with Olivia in London, of the very twelve months which Henry had partaken with Caroline in the country; and though, with reſpect to theſe two brothers, both then received the indelible impreſſions of love;—that love, ſo often at croſs purpoſes, contrived to reſerve for Henry the heart, which, coming into his poſſeſſion by that important year too late, was deſtined to render the one inexpreſſibly miſerable, and would have made the other exquiſitely happy.

Not that the latter then conſidered Olivia at an age to be the proper object of a declaration, had ſhe ſufficiently obliviated his former diſappointment, which was by no means the caſe; but he experienced a ſentiment ſo extremely anxious, about her future ſincerity, and felt ſo uneaſy at the perſuaſion that her preſent integrity could not laſt, that a man who ſecretly knew of

a hidden treaſure, and had an almoſt conſtant foreboding that it would ſooner or later be explored and taken from him, or, by ſome ſtrange power, turn to droſs, could not be more diſquieted in the intermediate time.

This led Olivia now and then to complain to her father, that ſhe feared ſhe had, unknowingly, ſaid, or done, ſomething to offend Mr. John Fitzorton, which, ſhe declared, ſhe would not do for the world, as ſhe believed him to be a very good, though a terrifying young gentleman.—"Two things," ſaid ſhe, once in a whiſper to Henry, "have always aſtoniſhed me; firſt, how any young woman ſhould dare to love John Fitzorton: or, how, having ſo dared, ſhe ſhould dare to be falſe to him!—For my part, had I been ever ſo much inclined to be bad, I ſhould have been abſolutely afraid."

It was about the time Mr. Clare quitted the metropolis to reſide conſtantly at the manor-houſe, that John entered into the military profeſſion, in the hope, as we have ſeen,

ſeen, of deriving conſolation from more active ſcenes.

On parting with Olivia he deſired her "to remember her promiſe of being a good little girl;" obſerving, "that if favourable report ſhould be made of her on his return, he would be her knight-errand, and ſhould ſhe ever be in diſtreſs or danger, her quarrel ſhould be his; and he would lay the caitiff, who ſhould wrong her, dead at her feet. But that, if ſhe turned out a 'whitened ſepulchre,' a golden idol, a demon maſqued, he would, in pity to her father, and in juſtice to mankind, move her to the darkeſt tower of ſome caſtle he ſhould take in war, and there keep her from the ſight of injured friends and betrayed lovers, for the reſt of her life!—uſing the very arms which ſhould fight her cauſe while it was juſt, againſt thoſe who ſhould dare to attempt her reſcue! On this I pledge my faith: ſo have a care, Olivia, honour or ſhame!"—Hereupon, John took her trembling hand, and preſſed it to his lips, kneeling down at the ſame time, with chi-

valric homage, to confirm the treaty. He ſpoke between jeſt and earneſt; but there was ſomething in the air and form of words that quickened the motion of her heart, and made it palpitate with apprehenſion. " Is it a compact?" ſaid John, riſing ſolemnly. " It is," anſwered Olivia; " but on my life, you are a very proper ſoldier; for ſo formidable a friend, muſt needs be a moſt terrible enemy! However," added ſhe, " I believe you would neither be friend or foe, but on juſt grounds; ſo the god of armies be your guard, and return you to us a conqueror!" Alas, the victory was hers; and John Fitz-orton was wounded, and a captive, before he entered the field.

Yet, whatever were his duties, or however he multiplied them, they were performed. Neither the ſoftneſs, nor the diſappointment, of his heart diminiſhed its natural energy. Had love returned, animated his arm, and Olivia been the expected reward, he could not have deported himſelf with more manly ardour.

Henry

Henry meantime,—ſo inſolved in mazes is the heart,—diſplayed to Olivia the very mind and adornments, that by a compariſon with thoſe of John, perhaps more powerfully attracted her than they might have done, if they had been ſeparately viewed: but thus forced into a contraſt between the two brothers, the awe in which ſhe had always held the one, found even a relief in the ſoftneſs with which ſhe contemplated the inviting addreſs of the other.

Very ſoon after the young warrior's return from his firſt campaign, to Fitzorton caſtle, he perceived, that whatever victories he had obtained abroad, he could ſtill hope for none at home. He found Henry in full poſſeſſion of the citadel. Olivia herſelf acknowledged her commander; and the ſacred lips of his parents ratified the avowal. There was an end of enquiry, and of hope. From that moment he looked on his own partiality as a rebel in his breaſt; and invariably uſed every mode he could deviſe to proſper their paſſion, and ſubdue his own. He lived in eternal warfare with his

generous heart; taxed it moſt ſeverely; inflicted on it a weight of reproof it could never deſerve; and when military duty did not ſummon, he broke from the caſtle, leaving all he loved, and all he honoured, the moment he felt his heart too tender to bear—what, indeed, is the moſt inſupportable thing in the world, to a man who has any heart at all,—the perpetual converſation of the family, about the diſpoſal of the only woman he ever truly loved; nay, frequently to hear from the enraptured lips, or ſee in the fluſhing cheeks, of that very woman, every ſentiment and ſenſation, which, in a leſs elevated and diſciplined character, would inflame jealouſy, and put in motion every act of vengeance or ſupplantation. John, alas! only drooped and diſappeared.

On the firſt day, however, of his return from the field, he took occaſion to aſk Olivia, in the preſence of both the families, aſſembled to greet him, whether before he laid down his arms he was to cover her with his laurels, or convey her to the dark tower?

Had

Had ſhe kept, or had ſhe violated her word? was ſhe ſtill the honoured, or the degraded Olivia?

Olivia bluſhed and trembled; "I ſee," continued John, "the bud has unfolded into more decided blooms. Its colours have gained ſtrength without loſing ſoftneſs; but are there not ſome flowers that ſhrink from a too near approach; and others that advance to meet it with congenial warmth? I am no poet, Henry, and know not, therefore, how to manage this image. Prith'ee, finiſh it for me."

"I will take upon me," ſaid James, the moderator, "to anſwer that queſtion. Whenever John Fitzorton ſtalks with a giant's force towards this amiable girl of ours, whom we are all in love with, ſhe is the ſenſitive plant, and trembles, over-awed, at his powers; but when, laying aſide his terrours, he makes her the object of his guardian enquiries, or confers on her mind, or perſon, thoſe praiſes which, it is known, he never laviſhes on the undeſerving, the warmth of her gratified heart, like

the ſunflower, ſprings to meet him, and ſends a glow into her cheek that ſhews ſhe is enamoured of ſuch praiſes, and is proud to have deſerved them."

"Hey dey!" exclaimed the hero, rallying, "I am afraid our balancer has loſt his equilibrium. Runs the tide even ſtill, James," added John, laying his hand on his brother's heart.

"I proteſt," cried Olivia, after ſome confuſion, "I know not what to ſay to any of you. If I am ſtill not at leaſt the vaineſt of women, I am certainly not without ſome claims; for every one of you has ſaid enough to ſpoil me; and as to our warrior brother—if trembling, and bluſhing, receding, and advancing, be proofs of merit, whenever I am in his preſence, I certainly muſt be one of the moſt deſerving girls in the world. I do certainly, always did, and believe ever ſhall tremble, like an aſpin, whenever Mr. John Fitzorton ſpeaks to me, and I cannot poſſibly help it. But if, before he has done ſpeaking, I perceive, or feel, that any part of my conduct could be

reported

reported to his ſatisfaction, if I then bluſh; it is with pleaſure, to think myſelf ſtill worthy the notice of ſo ineſtimable a friend."

The hero was diſarmed; he pauſed; felt his own cheek burn, and his own heart tremble.

"No dark tower, ſon John," ſaid lady Fitzorton, "but ſome gorgeous palace fit for one who is the boaſt of both our houſes, and likely to be the glory of our poſterity!"

A certain conſciouſneſs of his own ſituation, and the reliance he had on Sir Armine and Lady Fitzorton's repreſentations, added to thoſe of Mr. Clare, and the confirming teſtimonies of undiſguiſed predilection on the part of Olivia, kept John from any particular conference with Henry on the ſubject. There had never been any means of his knowing, that though Henry was moſt fondly loved by Olivia, Olivia never had been, nor ever could be, the choice of Henry. Alas! Olivia had never ſuſpected it herſelf; and thus, by a ſtrange concur-

rence,

rence, the one giving form, colour, and countenance, to the other, John and Henry Fitzorton, Charles and Caroline Stuart, and Olivia Clare, were all entangled in a web, out of which there appeared no hope of extrication.

CHAPTER L.

A WIDOW, AN ORPHAN, AND THEIR PROTECTOR.

JOHN Fitzorton had no ſooner left the grave of Maria, than he continued his way to the village, and paſſed the houſe where his heart's firſt confidence had been given and betrayed.

"Thoſe walls," ſaid he, "enclosed a beautiful deceiver! True, yet even the manſions of the bleſt, we are told, had their demoniac ſpirits;—but did a few degenerate angels make heaven leſs the abode of the good?—And in the vicinity of this polluted dwelling, had not, at the very moment of its fouleſt ſtain, the unſullied

Olivia Clare a reſidence ?—did Maria's contaminating breath ever reach it? Ah, no !—trembling, almoſt deſpairing, to ſee female integrity paſs beyond the impotent purity of childhood, have I not recently parted from one, whom with a jealous, an almoſt malicious eye, I have watched to the eſtate of womanhood, without finding any affectation ſtrong enough for remonſtrance, or any error deſerving a woman-hater's reprobation ? Alas ! I can diſcover in her nothing but my own faults ! —She is enriched," continued he, " with more virtue, and that virtue is graced with more beauty, than I can endure the aſſociation of, without ſelfiſh and often tormenting thoughts. I can no longer bear ſuch ſociety !—Ah, how often have the ſame feelings driven me from it !—and how often have I returned to prove my weakneſs—my wickedneſs !—Wretch that I am ! is ſhe not betrothed ? had ſhe not long ere this been my brother's wife, but for imperious circumſtances that poſtponed the nuptials ?—Has not every hour, every moment,

moment, ſhewn me that ſhe has not one beating of her heart which does not vibrate to Henry ?—yet, incorrigible John, in deſpite of all this, can only ſave himſelf from ſhameful detection by inglorious flight !"

He ſhuddered at himſelf, as he purſued his train of thought; and with hurried ſteps ſought a perſon a few miles farther on the road, with whom he had particular buſineſs; for alas! more ſecrets yet connect with John.

The name of the perſon he now viſited was Herbert. She was at home.

" You ſee," ſaid John, bowing to her with the utmoſt reſpect, and even trembling as he ſpoke, " you ſee I am returned alive, and am come to pay you my ſincere acknowledgments, and to ſettle accounts, and to make enquiry after the object of our mutual care. And how fares ſhe? ah, how fares the little unfortunate confided with you?—does ſhe grow in perſon, and in mind?—has ſhe talents? has ſhe beauty? —or gives ſhe the promiſes of either?—more than all, has ſhe all comforts?—and

offers

offers ſhe yet any ſymptoms of a heart that may one day deſerve them ?—and is your own heart as firm as I wiſh it ? and your happineſs ?—alas, Mrs. Herbert, how is your happineſs ?"

She ſighed, and was ſilent, then, after a pauſe,

" We are well, my beſt friend—well in health—nor is either of us unhappy :—can we be otherwiſe under the protection of ſuch a friend ?"

" Call me your foe, your bittereſt enemy : call me what, alas, I am ; neither war nor peace can make me forget."

" My deareſt patron, my deareſt friend, ſuch have you been, ſuch you are ; for pity's ſake, ſhift to other ſubjects."

" I always love, yet dread to ſee you, Amelia."

" I will ring for our Johanna," ſaid Mrs. Herbert. " O how good ſhe is : how true in mind, how fair in perſon ! ſo ſprightly, yet ſo timid ; ſo ſimple, yet ſo acute. How delighted will ſhe be to ſee you !"

" Me,

"Me!" cried John, agitated, "how ſo?"

Mrs. Herbert left the room haſtily, and returned leading in a beautiful young creature; at the ſight of John, ſhe ſtood rapt in aſtoniſhment, then exclaimed, "Good heaven! yes, it muſt be he, the original of my boſomed treaſure!"

John ſtartled, then recovering, "The power of a few years over that girl, is extraordinary," ſaid he; "don't be alarmed, my dear; I am a rough young ſoldier; we are perhaps both wondering at one another. You ſay ſhe is good, Amelia; is ſhe good enough to hear a-a-well-wiſher tell her ſhe is beautiful? for that is being good indeed! But I would have that which ſpoils older women, only ſtimulate this girl to merit your report. Yes, you are very beautiful; but you may, nevertheleſs, be more deformed in mind than the moſt ugly creature in the world."

Johanna was abaſhed. She found herſelf in the preſence of John Fitzorton! wondrous ſtories of whom ſhe had heard ſince

ſince laſt ſhe ſaw him: and remembering theſe, ſhe felt awed; and John was, as the reader is aware, an awful man. But, in making an obeiſance never taught in the ſchools, ſhe anſwered, "Yes, honoured Sir, all my books tell me, beauty may be nothing worth; of beauty I know nothing; yet preſume I muſt poſſeſs ſome traits of what is uſually eſteemed ſuch, or it would not have been imputed to me by my protector."

"Protector!" exclaimed John.

"And of one thing I am convinced, that I had rather be the moſt ugly young woman in the world—ſuch honoured Sir, as you mentioned—with a heart ſenſible of, and grateful for, the thouſand goodneſſes I receive from my governeſs and my guardian, than that world's moſt admired beauty, without the ſacred delight I now feel in this unexpected but long deſired opportunity of paying my duty to the beſt of benefactors."

"Benefactors!" reiterated John; "what means that expreſſion?"

Tears

Tears filled, even to overflowing, the eyes of Johanna, and, attempting to ſpeak, ſhe fell at his feet, claſped his knees, and called him her "more than father."

"I have been betrayed!" cried John.

"Oh! exclaimed Johanna, diſdain not the effuſions of a heart, that, lifted from the duſt, glories in acknowledging the hand that raiſed it. Do not, ah, do not, honoured Sir, call it infamy to have that known to me which the God of pity who gave me to your care, muſt look upon with ſacred pleaſure."

"What you know cannot be helped, child," ſaid John, raiſing the ſuppliant; "I have not time to talk of theſe matters at preſent, having buſineſs with your friend here. Continue to ſurpriſe me as you have done this day, whenever I may happen to ſee you, and you ſhall call me what you will."

After a ſuitable reply, Johanna withdrew, directing to John, at parting, a look of tenderneſs and veneration.

The man to whom this look was addreſſed, had an eye to ſee, and a heart to feel ſuch

ſuch acknowledgments; but they had been obtained for him, by ſome means, to which even the end, gracious as it was, could not be reconciled to his peculiar way of thinking.

"Madam," ſaid he, to Mrs. Herbert, "it is true I merit from you every wound; as you deſerve from me all the balms I can beſtow.—I have to thank you for the care which you have evidently taken of the child's perſon. I owe you on another account, alas more than I can ever ſettle, but I muſt remove Johanna."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Mrs. Herbert.

"I knew you wiſe, and thought you honourable. I knew you was unhappy: I knew I had made you ſo; I wiſhed fervently to offer you ſome reparation. I gave to you the ſociety of an innocent being, who knew not the misfortune of her birth;—and you have raſhly and officiouſly made her, I ſee, acquainted with her mother's infamy, her own wretchedneſs, and my diſhonour."

"You

"You are yourſelf the cauſe of what your generous heart wiſhed to have concealed, being known to Johanna," returned Mrs. Herbert. "You could not ſeparate her from the perſon in whoſe arms you firſt ſaw her."

"The jade!" cried John, "and ſhe has, woman-like, repaid me, for attending to the ſupplication, with treachery! My own fault indeed! I admit it: for ſhe deluded me once before, and I was fool enough to truſt her again. I hope, madam, you have turned her out of your houſe."

"Alas! ſhe has quitted it more than four months."

"Run away!—I am glad of it!"

Mrs. Herbert ſhook her head.

"Robbed you too, I ſuppoſe—good! but you ſhall not be a ſufferer. An infamous thief as well as traitoreſs!"

"Alas, no!"

"Some way done wrong. You are not a woman to turn a domeſtick out of your door, while fit to ſtay within it, Mrs. Herbert."

"I

" I turned her not away, Sir."

" I hope ſhe will not get into place again, till ſhe has fully repented."

" Be not ſo impetuous: I truſt in God that ſhe has repented, and in a much better place now, Sir."

Mrs. Herbert now told him, that the attendant he had recommended to her was dead; that till her dying moments, ſhe kept the ſecret confided to her; but that in thoſe moments, the attachment which Johanna had conceived for her, made her an almoſt conſtant attendant in her chamber, and particularly when the ſervant was near her end; becauſe ſhe had ſaid ſhe ſhould die more compoſedly if Johanna was near her. Our dear charge was in an adjoining cabinet when the laſt prayers were offered to the dying perſon, and when, rather in the wanderings of her departing ſoul, than in meditated treachery, ſhe informed the clergyman, there were ſome papers ſhe had put into the bottom of her box, which it would be better to throw into the fire, as the dear child, whom they concerned, was

now

now placed happily. "To be ſure, Sir, thoſe papers being written by the mother, belong to the child: but, as I have never mentioned them to her, nor to any body elſe, there can be nothing wrong in it."

The ſervant lived not to finiſh the ſentence, and before the officiating paſtor had opportunity to impart the converſation, Johanna, feeling herſelf fully entitled, poſſeſſed herſelf not only of the papers, but alſo of their ſad contents; for they proved a too faithful journal of all that preceded and followed her mother's fall, and all that connected, Sir, with your ſhare in her hiſtory."

"And who raſhly threw that hiſtory upon paper?" demanded John, but with no accuſing voice.

"Johanna's mother, Sir," anſwered Mrs. Herbert.

"It was, perhaps, natural, but I think it was wrong," ſaid John, indiſtinctly.

"The maternal hiſtorian had embelliſhed her ſad ſtory with an etching of its principal

principal character, Sir," continued Mrs. Herbert,—"which ſhe had placed in the front of her narrative, and had written round it, with her own hand, theſe words —'JOHN FITZORTON, THE BEST, AND THE MOST INJURED!"

"Indeed!" ſaid John, extremely affected; "but this, Mrs. Herbert, did not go to that perſon's protectorſhip of the child, which happened not till after that hand was cold in the grave: where then are we to look for this officious information, to call it no worſe?"

"In another female, I muſt confeſs, Sir."

"No doubt," ſaid John, ironically.

"In the daughter of the worthy proprietor of yon almoſt deſerted manſion," added Mrs. Herbert.

"Olivia Clare!" exclaimed John, with great emotion.

"The old gentleman, you know, Sir, now only pays it a viſit of two or three ſummer days in the year, and on one of thoſe the ſweet young lady paid a viſit to our little charge, whom, it ſeems, ſhe had

 met

met in ſome of her wood walks, when attended only by her maid; ſince which miſs Clare had begged to have her at the hall during their annual ſtay. She always brought her home in her own carriage, but requeſted, for reaſons, ſhe ſaid, ſhe was not at liberty to explain, I would not mention the matter to any body, unleſs it ſhould appear neceſſary."

John ſeeming ſtill inclined to liſten, Mrs. Herbert went on,—"One day our Johanna came home with eyes that I ſaw had ſuffered from weeping, and freſh tears fell from them as I enquired the cauſe. She told me, that Miſs Olivia had been reading the papers which had been found in the box; that ſhe had wept over them more bitterly than herſelf: ſhe told her, that the Mr. John Fitzorton, ſo often mentioned, was one of the deareſt and moſt beloved of her friends; lived often under the ſame roof; and though, for ſome time paſt he had been on foreign ſervice, he was expected home by her and every part of her family with the kindeſt impatience: and

that

that upon Johanna's aſking whether the etching reſembled him, ſhe anſwered that it did; but that ſhe thought her knowledge of his countenance might enable her to make it more ſo. Whereupon miſs Olivia took out her pencil, and while ſhe retouched the features, related to Johanna a number of circumſtances, which induced that ſweet girl, it ſeems, to ſay,—' What a happineſs, madam, muſt you enjoy to live in family friendſhip with ſuch a man!' ' A happineſs, indeed!' replied Olivia Clare, ' I reckon it amongſt the moſt exalted delights with which it has pleaſed Providence to ſurround me.'

" Did ſhe?—it was extremely—no doubt—ſhe—ſhe—did me too much honour, madam:—but—a—a—nothing more paſſed—I ſuppoſe?'

" Yes," continued Mrs. Herbert, " on giving back the drawing, miſs Clare ſaid, ' I think it now comes nearer to the original: but of that the expreſſion is ſo very powerful, and goes ſo very far beyond any imitation of life, that'—' Might I not be

permitted to ſee the life ?' queſtioned Johanna, with trembling earneſtneſs.—'When he comes down to us,' returned Miſs Clare, 'I will watch an opportunity; and if it be poſſible, let you have notice.'—Meanwhile,' obſerved Johanna, 'ſhould any chance or deſign bring him amongſt a hundred to my revered and loved Mrs. Herbert, with whom his dear good hand has placed me.—I think this ſketch of his features would point him out. Indeed I will carry it always about me, that I may be prepared: would I could ſee him!'—'No doubt you will often, my ſweet girl,' ſaid miſs Clare; 'but your papers mention that the drawing is but a copy of ſome more finiſhed likeneſs.'

Johanna, on coming home, aſked me if I had heard any thing about that likeneſs, but I could not tell her."

"I could," ſighed John,—"but I am glad that part of the ſtory has not gone farther."

John roſe, offered his reconciled hand to Mrs. Herbert, to whom he repeated his

ſenſe of the injuries he had done her formerly; then ſaid, that "he believed the child could not be in better hands, though it was rather unlucky ſome ſpot more remote from part of former events had not been thought of at firſt."

He ſighed heavily, and was ſilent, at length he took his leave, with a promiſe to return, or to write very ſoon.

CHAPTER LI.

JUVENILE HISTORY OF JOHN FITZORTON CONCLUDED.

WE will not ſo far inſult our reader's underſtanding, as to ſuppoſe that he has not, long before our declaration, concluded, that the promiſing Johanna was the daughter of the unfortunate Maria; and that her deceaſed attendant was the no leſs unfortunate Betty.

It will be remembered that John Fitzorton had declared the infant ſhould not

 lie

lie at the mercy of a forlorn condition, and myſterious birth. Uninfluenced by any other motive, than a conſideration of the innocent, he cauſed the child to be placed with one who had been endeared to him by a ſingular, and moſt diſaſtrous event, which threw her happineſs, and her fortunes, on his protection.

The houſe which he had, at firſt, taken for her, ſtood midway between the village of Maria, and that very ſeat of Mr. Clare's, where John was a viſitor, when the father of Johanna alienated her mother's affections from John Fitzorton. We have heard him already regret, that Mrs. Herbert was placed where part of Maria's hiſtory had been circulated in whiſpers; but it was a meaſure of haſte, and almoſt immediately after the burial of Maria; and he thought it, on reflection, wiſer to fix the child with a woman known and approved, and herſelf an object of his "ſworn attention," than with a ſtranger.

Having thus diſcharged his duty to the living, and to the dead, he continued his journey;

journey; and the next object that caught his attention on the way, was the well-remembered ſeat of the Clares, where firſt the lovely Olivia had been the nurſe of his wounded ſpirit.

Something impelled him to check the ſpeed of his horſe, at the firſt view of that manſion, and to go a foot pace, until he had paſt the boundary. He then turned round, rode part of the way back, to gain a point of ground which commanded the whole eſtate, and ſuffered his ſteed to graze, as he ſat obſerving the eventful ſcenery around. After which, ſuddenly recollecting himſelf, he exclaimed, "Deliver me, O God! from temptation." He reſumed the reins of his horſe, and proceeded with ſuch vigour, that as the ſhades were drawing their thin curtain over the brow of evening, he gained his quarters, where entering, earneſtly, upon official employment, the intervals of which were occupied by drawing out a plan of life for the future good of Johanna, he prepared his mind for events, which ſo far from wiſhing to pre-

vent, he desired to promote, and yet which he had never been able to hear or think of, even at the distance of near two hundred miles, without shuddering.—" Ah, how weak is the strongest!" would he often say; " Philosophy is the pigmy, and Nature the giant."

John numbered the pencil amongst his resources. It occupied, in this state of his mind, many an hour that would have been more painfully engaged without its aid; though it occasionally seduced him into subjects too near his heart.

A few minutes prior to his quitting the castle, Olivia reminded him of a promise to present her with a likeness of her beloved Henry; " for though I despair of even John's pencil doing him justice, yet you know," said she, " he is such a woodland, or mountain wanderer, and so often gets out of sight, that when I cannot have the orinal, the copy would be company for me.—Do then, John, think of it."

Some days after joining his regiment, this circumstance came into his mind, and

he

he ſat down to give the laſt touches to the miniature. In which employment, having now brought down his ſtory to the point of time propoſed, taking a retroſpect and immediate view of him, thereby combining his own portrait, at full length, we are reconciled to the bidding him farewell.

CHAPTER LII.

TOPSY-TURVEY: THE ART OF INVERSION.

SHORTLY after John's departure, another day of unremitting embarraſsment happened to Henry: the provoking croſs purpoſes began in the morning, and continued until the evening, and were indeed reſumed the next morning.

A gentleman now arrived at the caſtle, of a very ſingular character and converſation. His youth had been paſt partly at ſea, and partly in foreign climes; and being in poſſeſſion of a very competent

fortune as well from patrimony as from ſucceſsful adventure, he had, for ſome years back, quitted the ocean, and all its enterpriſes, and ſet himſelf down on ſhore, in a very comfortable dwelling, within a neighbourly diſtance of Fitzorton Caſtle. Mr. Partington had many peculiarities; —there was a rough honeſty in his manner, and a freedom of expreſſion correſponding to it, which, at firſt ſight, ſeemed more boiſterous and rugged than the element on which he had been educated. His perſon was ſomething under the middle ſize, and his features had little more of ſmoothneſs than his manners: but, beneath this uninviting exterior, beat a heart, every pulſation of which was genuine good-will to mankind, without the leaſt alloy of *ſentimentality*,—that ſhining droſs which makes ſo much glitter in theſe tinſel times. Partington, if he liked you, was a friend *indeed!* but, the more he fancied you, the rougher would you find his addreſs; and this rule held good in all the degrees of his approbation:—for, ex-

actly

actly proportioned to his *good opinion* was his jocular rudeness. If he thought tolerably *well* of you, he would call you a sad fellow; if, on farther acquaintance, you improved in his good graces, you would advance also in the scale of abuse, and he would speak of and *to* you as a cursed good-for-nothing devil: and when he had taken you into his heart,—wherein by the bye, you might confide your honour, your happiness, and your life,—he would honour you by the appellation of a damned insufferable scoundrel! This being the highest and most distinguishing mark of his esteem, could be boasted of by few; for Partington never thought any man or woman deserving of *this* mark of his affection, unless they appeared to him pre-eminently great or good. We say, "man or woman," because the sex of the person made no manner of difference to him.

His *dislike*, on the other hand, was expressed in quite a *contrary* way; but still he marked it by the same gradations. If neither your head nor your heart was satis-

factory to him,—that is, if the first was not worth carrying upon your shoulders, nor the other in your bosom,—he would, if he spoke to you at all, accost you in very civil language. If you had any thing remarkably base in your disposition, he would be yet more polite, calling you Sir, or Madam; and if he thought you deserved a box on the ear, or the gallows, instead of a bow, he would even *pull off his hat!*—which being the last evidence of his *abhorrence*, bore the same proportion of contempt that his *damned insufferable scoundrel* did of affection. Nor were even his benevolences themselves less remarkably his own, than his modes of expression. He never *talked* of doing any person a kindness, and yet was kindness itself. In truth, while other people were *only* talking, he would be doing the very thing they talked about; for he would slip out of company, on fifty different pretences, none of which you could suspect,—and have had an interview with the party he had heard commiserated, —then return to the company with no alteration

alteration in his general manner, but that of loading with exaggerated ſcurrility the perſon to whom he was indebted for the opportunity of being bountiful: for, as this was the higheſt obligation his heart was capable of receiving, he had no other way of returning it. But more frequently he would appear altogether inattentive to tales of diſtreſs, or, if he *did* give ear to them, would break out into—"Pſha!—don't tell me! riff-raff! ſtuff! a pack of beggars! I ſhould not have thought of their impudence! I ſay diſtreſs too!" and many ſuch like exclamations: yet he would be at the door, or at the bed-ſide of the ſufferers, and have every thing that was really of comfort in their habitations, before any other man of the party thought of leaving company. If, for inſtance, an apothecary was wanted, he would arouſe him in the middle of the night, drag him out of bed, or ſome way or other get him under his arm: and if common neceſſaries were to be ſupplied, he would run to his little *poor-raſcal's-warehouſe*, as he uſed

to

to call it,—and making up his bundle according to the caſe, carry it in his hand, and have done his work before his orders to an unintereſted domeſtick could have been well given.

CHAPTER LIII.

CONFUSIONS.

PARTINGTON had been long in the habits of intimacy with Sir Armine, and honoured the family with a liberal ſhare of his loving abuſe, whenever he made it a viſit; and each individual was as jealous of that abuſe as deſirous of his company. The trio of brothers filled his ſcale of epithets! James was only one of his middling ſort of fellows; John had the pleaſure to be ranked his curſed good-for-nothing caitiff; and Henry enjoyed the ſupreme diſtinction of being almoſt the *firſt* of his damned inſufferable ſcoundrels. "Hark'ee, you Mr. middling ſort of fellow," addreſſing himſelf to James after dinner, "how goes on

on the affair between this damned inſufferable ſcoundrel,"—here he ſhook Henry by the hand—" and you know who—you curſed good-for-nothing little devil?"—tapping Olivia on the cheek.—" What ſay *you*, you old raſcal?" added he, turning to Sir Armine: " are you getting your gouty legs in order, to dance at the wedding? 'Sbud! man, you ought upon that occaſion, to give us an hornpipe upon your ſtumps, like Witherington; for two ſuch pretty caitiffs as theſe do not come together every day, I can tell you! But, what are you all about, you lazy vagabonds,—ſhilly ſhally? If I were a parſon, they ſhould be married before I left the houſe;—young folks can't begin to be happy too ſoon.—Now look how that inſufferable poltroon" (to Henry) " ſhakes and trembles:—why, one would think, inſtead of feeling the flames of love on ſitting ſo cloſe to a fine girl, whoſe tell-tale bluſhes ought to make him blaze out like a bonfire, that the ague had got hold of him. By the arm of my body, he quivers like a Lapland witch! Well,

Well, come, I will give him my bleffing in a bumper. However, marry when they will, may the pledges of their love be juft as good-for-nothing as their parents! the girls abominable huffeys, and the boys damned infufferable fcoundrels! Put it round, old Vulcan!" faid he, pufhing the bottle to Sir Armine: he then ftood up, and fung fome ftanzas, fo replete with humour in themfelves, and in fo quaint and ludicrous a manner, that the whole company caught the hilarity of their worthy gueft.

"Was there ever fuch a comical creature?" exclaimed Olivia, fmiling.—"But hold, what is this I hear about Henry's going to be hanged for his fine devil's-works at the abbey?"

Henry's confufion was now redoubled upon another account: for he did not at all doubt but that the fubject which had been remotely alluded to by John, would be fully explained by this unqualifying fon of the waves. Henry winked, nodded, and made other figns of keeping filence, which

not

not only increaſed the curioſity of the company, but made Partington more determined. "I don't care for your wry faces a braſs button, you ſcoundrel," ſaid he: "I ſay, notwithſtanding all your anticks, you will come to the gallows:—'tis a ſerious matter to knock down a baronet on the very ſpot where he is to be buried, then throw his daughter into fits, and run away from both of them."

"Knock him down?" ſaid Olivia. "Why, good heavens! if it had not been for Henry, Sir Guiſe would have been murdered. And as to Miſs Stuart, for whom my ſoul ſtill bleeds, her fits were occaſioned, God knows, by the loſs of her ſweet mother: for, as her brother could not attend, Henry was her only comforter. This is the whole of the matter, I do aſſure you, Mr. Partington."

The earneſt ſimplicity with which ſhe uttered this, in the defence, and to the honour, of him ſhe loved, and for whom ſhe had always a vindication, had a viſible effect upon all, but more particularly on

Henry,

Henry, who, torn betwixt the ſenſations of gratitude and ſhame, tenderly careſſed her.

"You are both of you a couple of inſufferable ſcoundrels, and encourage one another. For that matter, I'd lay my life, if this egregious villain"—to Henry—"*ſhould* be hanged, this dimpling caitiff would tie herſelf up in her garters the next morning, that ſhe might lovingly dangle by his ſide, upon the ſame gibbet. So, as I hope yet to ſee them tied up together, I think 'tis the beſt way to pinion them now, till their time comes."—Here he drew them cloſe to his own boſom, formed their arms into the wreathe of love, and ordering the whole party to follow their example, conducted them into the garden.

CHAPTER LIV.

A GROUPE OF STRANGERS.

THUS were matters reinſtated, to the general ſatisfaction; and even Henry felt it might have been much worſe; for, though it had been ſo long the wiſh and endeavour of his heart to come to an explanation of its fatal ſecret,—any diſcloſure of it at ſuch a time, in ſuch a place, and under ſuch circumſtances, would have been the moſt overwhelming event that could have happened to him.

Partington, who had the romping playfulneſs of a boy, without the leaſt of that miſchief which uſually attaches to the ſport of youth, continued his pleaſantries, amongſt which was a propoſition to run upon the green-ſward along the park with Henry,—the winner to be entitled to a kiſs from Olivia, and Olivia herſelf to be the umpire.

He pointed to a clump of elms, as the given diſtance; then putting himſelf into a

ſtarting

ſtarting poſture, "There—I'll give you law, you villain—ſo away with you!" Henry was, perhaps, never leſs in diſpoſition for a frolick; but knowing that Partington, —who had now doubled his fiſts,—would have puſhed him headlong forward, had he ſuffered himſelf to be overtaken, he ſoon ſprung to the goal; in doing which, however, he contrived to trip up Partington's heels, to the no ſmall diverſion of the company. "A bubble bet!" cried Partington, ſcrambling up: "the race was obtained only by a fraud, elſe I ſhould have beat him hollow:—a contrived thing! I ſaw both the villains laying their heads together, concerting how it ſhould be, before I ſet off." The truth is, he loitered behind, while he counterfeited exertion, purpoſely that the ſuppoſed lovers might be thrown into each other's arms.

Theſe ſallies were interrupted by a knot of travellers, who were paſſing that part of the park, which Sir Armine left free for the accommodation of the publick.

The wanderers had the attractions of indisputable affliction, and of ſickneſs, its too frequent attendant, ſtrongly impreſſed in their air, looks, and motions. Yet there was no external appearance of want in any of the groupe; all were habited neatly, and one of them bore a wallet laden with food; but the moment you beheld them, your own heart would have told you they were deſtitute of comforts, which were not to be found in that wallet. There are certain ſigns and tokens of miſery, ſo viſible in the human form and countenance, that every man, without an inſult upon the human character and underſtanding, muſt ſee and feel them at a glance.

The groupe conſiſted of an elderly man, leading a boy about twelve years old,—a woman, ſomething under the age of the man, with a child at her back,—and a beautiful young woman, who, ſad and ſorrowing, followed the reſt. As the firſt and laſt mentioned objects ſtood by the ſide of the venerable Fitzorton, and the blooming Olivia, they exhibited, in ſtrik-

ing

ing contraſt, the wonderful difference which ſickneſs and health, happineſs and miſery, produce in beings of the ſame ſpecies, and at the ſame period of life. "Pleaſe your honours," ſaid the old man, reſpectfully, "I hope we are not upon treſpaſs here; a man on the other ſide told us, there was a foot-way here to the place we are going: we have come clean from weſt to north, and are ſomewhat footſore; and every bit of ground ſaved, therefore, is ſomething. Our Jane here, poor thing, can hardly drag one foot afore t'other: ſo, as night is coming on, and we are not acquainted with the country here-abouts, may-hap your honours, who, I ſuppoſe, are maſters of thatun great houſe, would be ſo kind to give us barn-room, till the morning."—To this Partington made anſwer, "he was afraid the vagabonds had ſtaid in their own pariſh till they were driven out of it bag and baggage; and were living now by accident in a barn, or a ſtable, or the open field, as they could manage it."—The old man anſwered, "Pleaſe your worſhip, none of

of us have been ever a burthen to the pariſh yet; and I hope, with the bleſſing of God upon our labour, we ſha'n't. But, we are burnt, ſtick and ſtone, out of our pariſh, where we lived upon our earnings, and a little matter beſides, for theſe forty years. May be your honour would like to hear a little about us. I am a maſon, your honour,—ſo I bought a bit of ground, and built a houſe on him, and furniſhed him, a thing at a time; and there 'twould have done your heart good, to ſee how we lived, till a ſort of quarrel betwixt me and a great rich perſon, who has an eſtate thereabout, and has a houſe like a town,—where nobody lives for a conſtancy, but a ſavage old ſervant or two,—for the maſter only comes a week or two in the ſpring ſeaſon, or to gather rents, when the ſteward, who, by the ſame token, is worth a hundred of his maſter, can't come down"—" God bleſs his goodneſs!" ſaid the woman, who appeared to be the mother of the family: " if it had not been for *him*, I do believe it would have been bad off for us long

afore; for the baronet was pecking and pecking at us, years a-gone: our Jerom, who is gone forward with the mule, got himſelf made a freeholder, and would not vote for a friend of this great baronight—for he is one who is '*titled* to do as he likes with poor folk,—*bore* us all a grudge."—"And ſomehow or other, your worſhip," reſumed the old man, "about Auguſt, in the ſummer after, I ſhut up houſe, whilſt I and dame and youngſter went a making a little harveſting at friend Armſtrong's, a couſin of my wife's, who has a bit of a farm, and who wiſhed me to bring all my family; and as we could make ourſelves tolerably tight and ſmart at that time, we rigged ourſelves out, and off we went; but when we got home from merry-making,—what a world it is, your worſhip!—I ſaw the top of my houſe where the bottom ſhould be, and the walls as black as my hat."—"Why, Reuben!" exclaimed the wife, "how can you be ſo milk-livered and mealy-mouthed, Reuben? Pleaſe your worſhip, as ſure as you ſtand there,

there, this great baronet, I told you about, had a hand in it, purpoſe to ſpite us; ſet it a-fire, Miſs, I ſay," "Hold your tongue, Sal!" ſaid the old man: "I don't think, Sir Devil's-come, as we call him in our parts, would go to ſet a man's houſe on fire, when there wa'n't a ſoul in it, either to pleaſe or to teaſe him, or to ſay, why do ye ſo? though to be ſure my houſe, as I ſaid, is down, and all that was in it, burned or moved off; and what was worſe, I had put into a drawer a little modukin of money, ſhillings and half crowns at a time, —now and then a golden guinea; and they are gone too; though I have been pottering about with my ſtick, and my family have all been on their knees grubbing i' the aſhes; but it was all to no purpoſe. This fellow would have gone to pot too," continued the old man, pointing to a curl-tail black dog that followed him, "and ſo would the kitten under our Jenny's arm there, if we had not luckily put ſhe to 'bide with Goody Brabſon, a neighbour of ours; ſo here is the whole family, your honour,

counting Jerom and Dorothy."—Olivia, who had before put a trifle into the young woman's hand, now ſtroked the kitten; and Henry, long before the ſtory had arrived at this ſtage, had made his offering; James, patted the dog, called him a lucky fellow, and aſſured him, conſidering ſuch dangers, he had a very narrow eſcape. At the ſuggeſtion of the houſe being maliciouſly ſet on fire, every particle of blood that ſupplied the body of Partington, flew in his face; he cried out, "O that the worthy baronet had been in the middle of the flames! I would have ſet fire to my own houſe, to have had him in the centre! but I don't believe a word on't! it's a lye! it muſt be a lye! I *will have* it a lye! Are you ſure, fellow, you did not ſet it on fire *yourſelf?* And why do you keep that child, woman, ſwinging at your back all this time, when there is ſuch a fine ſoft bank by the ſide of you, and the graſs full of flowers, and as dry as my walking-ſtick?" Here Partington looſed the bandages, took the infant in his arms, repeating, "Anſwer me

me that! anſwer me that! down with ye, down with every one,—you two old ſinners, in particular."—Partington appearing to bend them to the ground forcibly, but, in truth lowering them with all poſſible gentleneſs, "As for you," continued he, "good people," addreſſing himſelf to his own party, "the evening will ſoon begin to draw in, and the dew falls: think how your fine neckcloths and handkerchiefs will ſhrink at it:—ſun flowers can bear nothing but fair weather:—the dew won't ſuit your gouty limbs, you old ſcoundrel,"—to Sir Armine—"nor your delicate ancles, Mrs. Abominable,"—to Olivia—"the *vagqbonds* may remain; they are uſed to clouds: and ſo in with the family, you blubbering, water-headed raſcal!"—-to Henry—-He ſpake this as in rebuke, though by the bye, his own face was covered with tears—"Pack off, I ſay: I will have it ſo: I'll be with you preſently:—but you are to know that I ſmoke a damned lye, all through this buſineſs; and I am determined to have it out with the

ragamuffins; and I don't doubt but I ſhall have the ſatisfaction of ſeeing every one of them ſent to the houſe of correction; and that I ſhall bring them to old Armine here, to make out their mittimus." All this time they had been moving, or rather Partington had been puſhing them forwards: and as the Clares and Fitzortons knew the poor creatures would be left in good hands, they returned to the caſtle.

CHAPTER LV.

EXAMINATIONS.

"IT is among the wonders of the world, when I wonder," quoth Partington, to the family in the park: "and yet I muſt confeſs, the audaciouſneſs of your telling that impudent lye about ſome worthy gentleman's getting people to burn down your houſe, becauſe you would not vote againſt your conſcience, does throw, even me, into aſtoniſhment."—"Sir," anſwered the old man, with ſome dignity, "I do not pretend

to

to ſay it is ſo for ſartain: but Goody Brabſon is ready to ſwear it; for ſhe was diſturbed the night before, and ſaw ill-looking fellows lurking about; and before that day come-week, my houſe was down;—but as for a lye, I don't know whether I would tell one to have it built *up* again."—— "No!" anſwered Partington:—"then give me your hand, you ſcoundrel;"— "But, for that matter," reſumed the old man, "there are hotter doings at electioneering, than burning down poor men's houſes—Why, bleſs your worſhip, I have ſeen the candidates, as they call themſelves, ready to ſet fire to one another."—"Aye, your honour," interpoſed the old man's wife, "that's not half the miſchief! there was ſomething worſe than 'lection riots in this affair:—naughty Jenny there, and this poor brat at my back, if it could ſpeak, could tell you all about that."—Here the young woman, whom ſhe called Jenny, made ſigns for her mother to keep ſilence; upon which the mother exclaimed, "Huſſy, I will ſpeak! his honour here ſhall know

who are ſcoundrels, and who are not! Mayhap his honour is a juſtice of the peace, and will give us ſome law.—An' pleaſe your worſhip, that baronet is the father of this babe; after my Reuben had refuſed his vote, this baronet grew ſo kind, that we thought, God help us, he repented his *haſhneſs* to us; whereupon I was a kind of a char-woman now and then at the great houſe, when he came down for a week or two: and if I was wanted at home, why, I ſent Jenny there, as well ſpoken and likeſome a girl, your honour, aye, and as ſhame-faced then, and for that matter now, tho' ſhe has had a baſtard, as any ſhe of the country;—and ſo, behold ye, this villain of a baronet was only kind for the ſake of ſhe; and behold ye, he contrived to get to the ſight and ſpeech of her, and ſoon put the girl aſide herſelf; ſhe could talk of nothing but the baronet: —the baronet told her this—the baronet gave her that!—I believe in my conſcience he turned her ſilly head, and overſet her in ſuch a way, that ſhe was crazy enough to think

think of becoming my lady:—aye, and he put a new golden ring on her finger, and called her wife—though he was married before, and, they do ſay, to a *moral* of a woman—not that he ever brought maddam down—and he perſuaded ſilly Jane ſhe was dead—thof a maddam he had there too; and there ſhe comes at times ſtill, for a month in the ſummer, and ſays ſhe's the baronet's cozen!—marry come up! a dainty cozen! I warrant, ſhe cozens his virtuous wife finely. But to return to our Jenney:—Reuben and I began to think it odd the girl ſhould get ſo much into favour, ſeeing how we were hated before: but we ſtill were fools enough to believe that Sir Guiſe ————"

"Sir Guiſe!" exclaimed Partington: "is *he* the baronet? It's all true,—get up—tell the reſt of your ſtory as you go along. I ſee you are a pack of ſad ſcoundrels; and I ſhall inſiſt upon Fitzorton's houſe covering all of you ſomewhere until morning. And do you hear, girl?—Jane, I think is your name—do you lean on my arm; and

do you, mother Blab, take hold of the other arm—you, young varlet, keep close by your father—hussy, keep you by your mother—but as to the suckling, you must carry that sin yourself, Jane; for the devil seduce me if I touch any thing belonging to that pretty gentleman unless I should have the felicity of tucking him up under the gallows. Well, but that happy day may come yet!"

Partington had the family all up on the march before he had got to the ejaculation with which he finished his harangue,—and disposed the several persons in the order described. In this manner they were moving along towards the castle, when they encountered Henry, who, partly in consequence of Olivia's whisper, and partly to gratify his own curiosity,—or, perhaps, from a better principle,—was returning to the spot where he left the groupe. Without relating stories, or entering into causes, Partington ordered Henry to run as fast as his legs would carry him back to the castle, order a comfortable supper, but not among the

the ſervants, and half a dozen well aired beds, and tell old ſquare toes it was his command :—"Nay that 'tis the old caitiff's duty," ſaid he ; "for here is juſtice buſineſs enough for a whole ſeſſions ; and moreover, if he don't chuſe to accommodate them, come back again and tell me ſo, that I may take them to the Fitzorton-arms publick houſe ; for they ſhall not go out of my cuſtody till I ſift the affair to the bottom ; and as it's moon-light, a mile or two more or leſs, for good ſuppers and good beds, can make little difference."—Henry, who was ever ready to aſſiſt the unfortunate, without paining them by a recital of diſtreſsful ſtories, haſted, without aſking a ſingle queſtion, to execute his commiſſion.

Partington returned to the travellers, who began to think him inſane, and put himſelf nearly in his former ſituation, with the difference only of taking the child gently from the young woman, who had been giving it ſuck, and ſaying, at the ſame time, "Come, as that little raſcal may one day be brought in evidence againſt its virtuous

father, I think I will give it a lift: and ſo go on with your walk and your ſtory, old caitiff."

"As I was ſaying then, your worſhip, we fooliſhly thought Sir Guiſe Stuart ——"

"Proceed," cried Partington, "if you can, without any more mentioning that worthy gentleman's name, for it puts me in a fever: call him—call him—baronet."

"The baronet then," anſwered Mrs. Atwood, "was never eaſy but when ſome of us was at the great houſe; he wanted Reuben to give up maſonry:—we ſtaid in the pariſh a twelve-month after the fire, with Goody Brabſon:—the baronet wiſhed us to take one of his farms,—ſometimes he ſaid he would pull down the great houſe, and build up a finer, which would do for his ſon, when he married, and give Reuben the job: and as for Jenny, I don't know what he was to do for ſhe,—he would take her to his other great ſeat in theſe parts;—I never was there, your honour; but I *will* be there, and ſooner than he thinks.—Well, he would pull this other down, and let her live

live with miſs—miſs Caroline:—ſo we e'en let her go; and coil enough there was about it, from Reuben, who had been told by neighbours, what would become of it; however, I thought it for the beſt; and away ſhe went."

"Accurſed be the hour ſhe did!" ſaid Reuben.

"Don't interrupt her, you vagabond," cried Partington, doubling his fiſts,—not at Reuben, however, nor at any perſon preſent.

"The upſhot of it was, an' pleaſe your worſhip, that one Valentine Miles, a man that uſed to do all Sir Guiſe's—I beg your honour's pardon, I mean—the—the baronet's dirty work, ſuch as pounding our ſtrays, ſuing for rents, and the like—Miles, I ſay, your honour, took Jane, as he ſaid, to Guiſe Abbey; but in fact, far enough a-field from that: he carried her up to London; always calling her my lady—and, as the fooliſh girl was in love, ſhe believed it:—and for that matter, ſhe lived like a lady, ſure enough--lady's maids, lady's

livery-men, and what not!—no wonder, your worſhip, poor Jane believed it all goſpel, for I thought it ſo myſelf—for *a'ter* this, he had her married over again: but that was ſham too, juſt like the ring buſineſs *afore;* for the fellow who married her, was as little of a parſon, and as great a rogue, as himſelf:—ſo your worſhip ſees the end on't"—"Whew!" whiſtled Partington.—"And we might have lived in ignorance, and ſhe in wickedneſs, poor thing, a great while longer," continued the afflicted, father, careſſing his betrayed daughter, "had not ſomebody ſent us a *nonmus* letter, as they call it, ſaying our daughter was a double U, Sir Guiſe Stuart, an R—— and the child a B——."

Partington here gave the old maſon another ſhake by the hand, and then bade the wife proceed.

She then related a variety of other heinous particulars, unfolding the villany of Sir Guiſe and his agents, and ending with the recovery of the deluded Jenny to the arms of her family. "Yes, your honour," ſaid

ſaid Mrs. Atwood, in concluſion—"and ſo this very day was ſix weeks brought Jenny and her brat home to us again, dreſſed in the very gown ſhe went away in,—a good ſtuff of *our own honeſt buying*, and which ſhe has got on, you ſee, at this preſent.—But, with the bleſſing upon us, we'll make the baronet aſhamed of it yet; for we are going to ſettle, not paſſing more than thirteen or fourteen miles on t'other ſide of his abbey; and we have come a matter of that about, purpoſely to tell him a piece of our mind: and if your worſhip can do any thing in this affair, give us ſome juſtice; for we'll have none of his money: ſo far contrary, indeed, that one of the panniers, with Jerom, is loaded with all the things,—ſome of 'em pretty ſmart ones too,—that he gave us before Jenny went from us.—As to the fine clothes, and trinkum-trankums he gave ſhe, they were all left behind at the wicked place where we found her."

Their walk and their recital ended together; for they had now arrived at the caſtle, where they were again met by Henry, who

told

told Partington all things would be done as he had directed.—"Then lead the way," ſaid Partington; "for theſe are much greater vagabonds than you think, and muſt be taken care of accordingly."

Henry conducted them to a large apartment adjoining the ſteward's—Partington uſhered them in, ordered the ſervant to place chairs,—aſſiſted in the buſineſs himſelf, obſerving, that, "though they were vagabonds, they were every one to be treated with the utmoſt reſpect."—He deſired them to eat, drink, and be merry,—to be in good humour with one another; but, above all things, not to ſay a ſingle croſs word to that good-for-nothing huſſy, Jane; and to take care that the child had ſome pap.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER LVI.

INNOCENCE AND GUILT.

HENRY and Partington returned to the company, where Olivia was ſtill preſiding at the tea-table, declaring Mr. Partington ſhould not go without his uſual beverage. This was a pint baſon filled with tea, and milk, and honey, in equal proportions. "If you would not have me choaked with rage, give me the *ſlop!*" ſo he always called it: —and ſeeing the baſon before him, he ſpilled one part of it, and ſwallowed the other; then taking breath, he threw himſelf into a chair, the blood ſtarting into his face, while he recited the hiſtory of the Atwoods, making no other variations than diſtinguiſhing Sir Guiſe by the words "fine fellow! pretty gentleman! the hero of the tale!" But, though theſe epithets were not bitter in language, they were intolerably ſo in the manner of their delivery: for, at the mention of his atrocities, he would ſometimes leap up, take the room at a couple of

of ſtrides, exclaiming to a chair, to a table, to one of the company, or even to his own ſhadow in the glaſs, ſuppoſing it were Sir Guiſe, "Your moſt obedient very humble ſervant, my noble baronet! I truſt your execution is not very far off; for other facts are coming out, I dare ſay."

The effect which the narration had upon the company, was various. Lady Fitzorton lifted up her hands, and wept ſilently.—Mr. Clare exclaimed, "Execrable wretch!"—Sir Armine knit his brows, and ſaid, "Poor Charles! what does he not deſerve, to atone for the curſe of ſuch a parent?"—Olivia ſaid, "The poor girl and child deſerved every care, that innocence betrayed, and helpleſs infancy, could receive from pity."—"Theſe old caitiffs too have their merits," cried Partington. "But what can be a ſufficient tribute of admiration for Miſs Stuart?" exclaimed Olivia—"ſo good! ſo conſiderate!—how, my dear Henry, ſhall we do honour to her?"—Henry looked as if he ſubſcribed fully to the eulogy.

Partington, however, was the moſt buſy of the groupe. His hands, head, and heart, ſeemed to be full; and he divided the evening between his inſufferable ſcoundrels above ſtairs, and his abominable vagabonds below.

Olivia, too, frequently ſtole out, and whiſpering Henry, who always diſappeared ſoon after, haſted to Partington's gueſts; and, under pretence of aſking if they had every thing comfortable about them, took occaſion to ſhew many little marks of a generous nature and of genuine good-will.

She had particularly directed her own maid to provide all things proper for the child, and would have ſent to the manor-houſe for her own cradle, but was prevented by Henry, who reminded her there were ſeveral in the caſtle.—"Gracious! perhaps your own—what an honour, if we could procure that!" exclaimed Olivia: "the poor babe is innocent, you know: alas! and its mother can ſcarcely be called guilty, my Henry."

Prior again to this, True George had been dispatched by Partington to the eastern gate of the park, at which Atwood's eldest son Jerom, with Dorothy, was appointed to wait his family's joining him.—"The boy will stand stock at the gate, please your worship," said old Atwood, as he overheard Partington giving directions: "he *said* he would, thof it were for a couple of nights. I never see'd such a boy for that: bid 'un do a thing: and if he answers 'Aye,' the thing's done; but then again, if he gives you one of his *noes*, i'cod, your worship, he's more of a mule than Dorothy!"

"I see into the vagabond's character at once," replied Partington. "Go then, George: you will find him stuck to the gate; and if he won't leave it, take Armine's team, and bring gate and all."

True George, when he had a good-natured thing to do, never addicted himself to unnecessary delays, and was, besides, one of the most active young fellows in the world. He set off, therefore, for the eastern gate,

as if his own bed and board depended on his diſpatch.

To confeſs the truth, this honeſt fellow had been more in the ſecrets of Atwood's family than any other of the ſervants. Indeed, he was a youth of moſt inſatiable curioſity, where the gratification thereof had but the probable aſpect of being attended by a good office; in ſearching after which, he was indefatigable. And judging from his beloved maſter Henry's ſecond viſit to the park, by moon-light too, that ſome new adventure was near, he had contrived to take his uſual ſtation of an outpoſt, for fear of being diſcovered. By a little *buſh*-fighting, however, which is extremely honourable, he formed his ambuſcade behind ſome flowering thorns, which grew in that part of the park where Mr. Partington recapitulated, in an audible voice, ſo much of the Atwood's ſtory as had then been told.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER LVII.

A RARITY: WOMAN PITYING THE FALL OF WOMAN.

WERE it our intention to give to each of the heroes and heroines of this epick hiſtory a day of prowefs, after the manner of the great Mæonides, who dedicated one book of his Iliad to Ajax, another to Agamemnon, and ſo on,—we ſhould certainly conſecrate this chapter to the achievements of Olivia, who, from the orient ſun, even to his down-going, and again to his uprifing, was employed in doing at leaſt as much good as any illuſtrious ancient or modern, whom fable or truth has yet celebrated, were we to begin with Philip of Macedon, and end with Frederick of Pruſſia; and we do not at all deem it unreaſonable to declare that we expect the very abridgment of her acts, during the abovementioned ſpace, will make the reader more in love with her, though rehearſed in humble proſe, than if, in imitation of thoſe royal

royal butchers, ſhe had laid a thouſand of her fellow creatures, with her own hand, dead at her feet, in the field of battle.

The day, then, of the fair Olivia Clare, was uſhered in by an act, mild and lovely as the firſt ray of the morn which ſhone on it,—even by an early walk round the garden with the unfortunate Jane Atwood. Luckleſs victim! thy modeſt appearance and bluſhing graces, and all the deep regrets of downcaſt conſciouſneſs ſtreaming from thy eyes; thy keen ſenſe of the *novelty* of a virtuous woman ſoothing and not aggravating the fate of a woman betrayed,—juſtified thy mother's deſcription, and made the compaſſion and loving kindneſs of thy protectreſs a virtue worthy to be imitated by thy ſex! a ſex, too often cruel and unrelenting to moſt pitiable victims.—After ſeveral turns about the walks, Olivia conducted her ſtill trembling protegée to the breakfaſt-room, where the Atwoods had been invited by Sir Armine to join the family: but ſeeming to feel themſelves farther from home there than

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in the apartment where they had paſſed the preceding evening, they were again committed to the care of Partington and True George.

Olivia underſtanding this, begged permiſſion to ſeat Jane between Henry and herſelf, ſaying in a whiſper to her father, "Becauſe, you know, we can comfort and make her chearful." Beſides the ſhyneſs which only an intercourſe with the world can remove, a painful conſciouſneſs of her error, and of the knowledge which the company had of it, made the timid Jane diſcover ſo much uneaſineſs, that the good-natured Olivia perceiving it, led her firſt to the window, and then out at the door, ſaying, "her young friend was not very well, and though ſenſible of the honour intended her, wiſhed to take breakfaſt with her own family." Partington's propoſal to blend the Atwoods and Fitzortons at breakfaſt, was amongſt the generous little inconſiſtencies or rather indiſcriminations which were interwoven into his character, inſomuch that you would ſometimes ſee at

his table perſons whom, from their difference of character and condition, any man who attended to the ceremonies of the world, and indeed to the diſtinctions of ranks in ſociety, would have thought it impoſſible he could bring together. But the ſame objection by no means held againſt the propriety of Olivia bringing this young woman into ſo much good company :—the beſt and moſt juſtifiable motives influenced the fair protectreſs ; and there was a natural grace and gentility about the no leſs fair protected, which Sir Guiſe, in giving her the beſt maſters, had not a little improved. In truth, Jane attributed her misfortune, and all its fatal conſequences, to the violence of the baronet's paſſion for her; and ſhe looked on the mock nuptials as ſo ſolemn a pledge of his love, that ſhe herſelf encouraged the wiſh of Sir Guiſe, that the union ſhould remain ſecret, from an idea which ſprung from the purity of her affection, that having the joy to tell her own heart he was her wedded lord, ſhe had rather continue to be thought

herſelf

herſelf diſhonoured, than that he ſhould be degraded. Her father's finding and carrying her off, ſhe long conſidered as the ſole cauſe by which ſhe had been ſeparated from the baronet;—and although none of theſe motives wholly obliterated the inward ſenſe of her firſt indiſcretion prior to her ſuppoſed honourable union, or ſuppreſſed the ſigh ſo often as ſhe turned her thoughts towards her deſerted father and his family,—ſhe cheared herſelf by reflecting that if ever ſhe ſhould qualify herſelf ſo as to juſtify Sir Guiſe in owning her as his lawful lady, all would ſtill be well. Inſpired by the expectation of ſuch a reward,—ſhe applied with unwearied diligence to whatever might render her more attracting in manners, and cultured in mind.—Her grand object, in attempting the adornment of both, was to deſerve the honour which ſhe believed Sir Guiſe had conferred on her; and to enable him to acknowledge her with leſs comparative diſgrace;—and as the baronet ſometimes found relief in her gentleneſs, from the violence of Mrs.

Tempeſt,

Tempeſt, and the diſturbance of his thoughts on his uſage to the real Lady Stuart,—his kind treatment of her made her ſtill lay much of his deception to his fear of loſing her by a diſcovery of the truth; and although her parents, more eſpecially her mother, never uttered his name without annexing to it a curſe,—ſhe acknowledged to Olivia in the garden, that, although ſhe too well knew ſhe had herſelf acted very wrong, ſhe did not believe he was half ſo bad as people repreſented him. "This I muſt ſay: though, except we happen to meet with him at home this morning, I muſt never hope, and indeed, I do not—de—deſire—that is—I do not—*ought* to deſire, ever to ſee him more."—"This morning child?" queſtioned Olivia: "What do you mean?"—"Yes, madam, my father and mother, and my brother Jerom, are determined to ſee him, and—and Jerom ſwore on his knees——But what good can it do, madam, to drag me before his family? And then my brother is ſo paſſionate!—If, indeed, Sir Guiſe could

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be ſent for to any other place but his own houſe—and—and—talked--to—about me, or about the poor child———or if—if— Would to heaven ſome kind-hearted perſon, though I know I do not deſerve it, would try to diſſuade my father from going to the abbey. Would to heaven, Miſs Caroline Stuart did but know, or that I could any way get a letter to her! I have one ready written I am ſure *ſhe* would contrive —O miſs, you do not know what an angel ſhe is;—not that I ever ſaw her but once— but that once, I ſhall never forget it—ſhe almoſt broke my heart:—one Mr. Denniſon, the baronet's ſteward, whom we ſometimes ſaw at Clare Place, brought her unawares to my lodgings, when he knew his maſter was gone a journey; then it was that ſhe told me, if I would return home to my poor father, and make my family a viſit, and then find ſome excuſe to ſtay with them, without letting any body elſe know of it, except Mr. Denniſon, ſhe would take all the care of the child to herſelf, nurſe and provide for it as her own, and that ſhe

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would promiſe I ſhould not only hear about its welfare, but contrive, now and then, to let me ſee it, by means of Mr. Denniſon; and none of my family being let into the ſecret; and that as to Sir Guiſe, ſaid the ſweet young lady—(except yourſelf, miſs, I never ſaw her equal, either in goodneſs, or in beauty)—it will be eaſy for us to manage matters with him: for you know, Jane, continued ſhe, he muſt at times be grieved as yourſelf, for the injury you are both of you doing to the moſt affectionate wife in the whole world.—Then it was, I firſt diſcovered his former marriage, and on authority, alas! I could not diſbelieve. She ſaw the agonies into which the information threw me, and tried to ſooth them;—ah! why are not all good people, all virtuous ladies, ſo mild as her when they ſpeak to—to unhappy women? Sure the gentle accent would have more proſelytes than the ſtern rebuke.—What an atonement it will be—exclaimed the angel daughter of the unfortunate Sir Guiſe—what an atonement, Jane, for the wrongs you have done my

poor mother, who is, both in ſpirits and health, a ſufferer, if you,—who were ſo often the unknown cauſe, though, I own, an unconſcious one, of her huſband's eſtrangement and abſence from home,—ſhould alſo be the ſecret cauſe of his return to her! I am ſure I, as his child, ſhall be bound to pray for you during my whole life! and ſhall look upon the attentions I ſhew this poor little thing—(my child, you muſt know, was then, continued the weeping Jane, aſleep in the cradle juſt by me) —I ſay, I ſhall look upon the attention paid to your babe, Jenny, as part of the gratitude I owe the mother, for the amiable conſideration ſhewn for my own parent; and, indeed, your merit, my good girl!—ſhe called me ſo, miſs, though I did not deſerve it—will be much greater than mine, on this occaſion: for you, perhaps, will ſacrifice a ſtrong, though an improper paſſion, to a much ſuperior principle, and I ſhall be but an humble inſtrument to reward you for ſo doing! But your reward, Jenny, will be much greater, and adminiſtered to

you

you by an infinitely higher power, whoſe forgiveneſs of the paſt will be accompanied by eternal happineſs in future!—Here, miſs, the ſweet lady took my child in her arms, and kiſſed it ſeveral times, and putting it again into the cradle, ſaid—Yes, and this dear little thing too ſhall honour its mother; the firſt words I will teach it to liſp ſhall be *bleſs my mother* for all her goodneſs!

" But all Miſs Stuart's intended kindneſs was put a ſtop to by a wicked woman, Mrs. Tempeſt,—and a tempeſt ſhe is by name and by nature,—who ferreted me out. I deſerved all ſhe did; ſhe pulled the hair from my head, by handfuls, before his face; ſhe made him promiſe I ſhould go away from him, before ſhe would quit the houſe; and, after repeating all the ſhocking names ſhe had before made uſe of, and curſing me ſeveral times (for ſhe ſwore terribly), ſhe threw herſelf out at the door, declaring, ſhe would be the death of both, if her own ſoul was the forfeit, unleſs he brought her word I had left the lodgings,

lodgings, never to return: ſo that you ſee Sir Guiſe was forced into what he did; yet I thought on what his good daughter had ſaid to me, though it was no time to make him more wretched by my reproaches, or ſpeak of the fatal truths which had been told to me. But I was going to ſend my father word, if he would receive me I would return home, and never ſee the baronet more,—when my father himſelf, and my couſin Jonathan, entered the room, while Sir Guiſe was there: they found me with my hair diſhevelled, and every part of my dreſs in diſorder; which led them to ſuppoſe that Sir Guiſe, who looked no leſs terrified than myſelf, had been beating of me: for it was juſt after Mrs. Tempeſt had gone away. But I never breathed the name either of good Mr. Denniſon or his young lady, to Sir Guiſe, or to Mrs. Tempeſt; ſo that they cannot come to any harm on my account,—there's ſome comfort in that."

Here the tender and afflicted Jane talked to the infant, kiſſed, and wept over it,

while

while Olivia experienced ſtrong emotions of grief, love, and admiration, as well for the friend of her infancy, Miſs Stuart, as for the mother and the child.

THE END OF VOL. I.